SRI HARI

442

TURN TO GOD

R

55

HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

(Rendered into English by Shri C. L. Goswami
and his associates)

SRI HARI

TURN TO GOD

Hanumanprasad Poddar

Publisher
Govind Bhawan Karyalaya,
Gita Press, Gorakhpur.

First	Edition	1971	5000	Copies
Second	Edition	1986	10,000	
		Total	15,000	

Price Rs 3.50

Acc. 21765 (296ex)

Printed by - FLEXOPRINT

Gita Press, P.O. Gita Press, Gorakhpur, U.P.
(INDIA)

Sri Hari

Preface

This handy volume is a collection of a number of inspiring and illuminating articles from the pen of a learned and saintly writer, who did not feel inclined to disclose his identity and wrote under the pen-name of "Śiva". As he is no more in this world, having breathed his last on the 22nd March last, we make bold to disclose his name and tell our readers that the writer was no other than the late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar, the renowned Editor of the Hindi 'Kalyan' and Controlling Editor of the English 'Kalyana-Kalpataru', the two popular and very widely read monthlies published by the Gita Press, with whose epoch-making services in the field of spiritual literature they are already familiar. The articles originally appeared every month in the 'Kalyan' under the caption 'Kalyan' and were later on rendered into English by the Editor or Editors of the 'Kalyana-Kalpataru' or 'the Bliss', and regularly published in it under the caption "Unto Bliss". These articles have been highly appreciated by the readers of both the magazines and are read with avid interest every month. They speak for themselves and provide most excellent and sumptuous spiritual pabulum to the readers. The homely and touching instructions contained in them have a wonderfully universal appeal and are absolutely free from sectarianism or dogmatic touch. They can be read with equal benefit by the followers of all religious creeds and, if followed with reverence, are sure to take them to lofty spiritual heights.

The articles have also appeared in a number of handy volumes in Hindi and we are reproducing below the words of the author himself introducing the very first volume to the readers :—

"The mind is an ocean of thought-waves. Many such thought-waves arise in the mind of "Siva" and some of them get recorded too. This small collection of the aforesaid thought-waves reduced to writing is being released. The faults of tautology and desultoriness may be noticed in this collection; for, after all, they are waves of the mind. It is no doubt true that there is a law operating behind the waves too and that they move in regular succession; but we are unable to perceive that order with our physical eyes. What we see are so many disorderly and irregular forms of the waves moving along with the blasts of the wind. It is possible those who view these waves with a critical eye may be able to discern some order even in this collection of thought-waves. "Śiva", however, has no concern with this. At the instance of the publishers, "Śiva" has only strung together passages strewn here and there and given a heading to them. "Śiva" does not know whether this will or will not prove to be the source of any benefit or amusement to the readers."

We have great pleasure in introducing to the English-knowing public this third small volume of the series under the caption "Turn to God" with the hope that it will be read with the same interest and benefit as the two preceding ones.

Gorakhpur
Sri Ramanawami
1971

C.L. Goswami

Contents

1. The True Goal Of Life 1
2. How To Sack Suffering And Sorrow 4
3. The Way To Eternal Peace 6
4. Turn To God. 9
5. Have Faith In God's Omnipresence. 12
6. Feel Always The Presence Of God. 15
7. God Is always With You. 18
8. Cherish Trust In God. 20
9. Your Sincerest Friend Is God. 23
10. Trust You Ever Belong To God. 26
11. Be One With Divine Grace. 29
12. All Is Bliss. 32
13. Cultivate Love For God. 35
14. Be United To God. 39
15. Seek God With All Your Might. 42
16. Instal God Within Your Heart. 45
17. Take Refuge In Him. 48
18. Realize God Through Purity Of Heart. 52
19. In God Abide. 56

20. Act For The Sake Of God. 59
21. Sluggishness Opposed To Godliness 65
22. Climb The Ladder Of Divine Love. 69
23. What Invites God's Pleasure? 72
24. Look Within. 75
25. Hold Fast To Your Sadhana. 79
26. Break The Boundaries Of Your Self. 83
27. Eradicate Ego. 86
28. Happiness Through Renunciation 89
29. Contentment Is Peace. 92
30. Cut Worldly Ties And Be Wise. 96
31. Mend The Mind. 99
32. Stick To Virtue. 102
33. Rectify Your Own Faults. 105
34. Discard Sense-Enjoyments. 108
35. Cultivate Good Thoughts. 112
36. Plant Flowers Not Thorns. 116
37. Ever Keep Yourself Cautious About Sin. 119
38. Pain Is Gain : Pleasure Is Loss. 122
39. Welcome Divine Dispensation. 125
40. Bury Your Worries. 128
41. March On Your Own Path. 131
42. Be A True Devotee. 134
43. Never Look At Other's Faults. 138
44. The Palatable Poison. 142

45. Eschew All Evil. 146
46. Not Poke But Patch A Hole. 150
47. Utter Honeyed Phrase, Shun Groundless Praise. 153
48. Money Can Be A Blessing Or Curse. 156
49. Right Use Of Riches. 160
50. Harbour Noble Thoughts. 163
51. Do Not Defer Devotion. 166
52. Nature of Unalloyed Love. 170
53. Glory Of Satsang. 174
54. The Virtues Of A Saint. 177
55. Reward Of Mind-Control 180

①

The True Goal Of Life

Remember : the success of human life lies in God-realization, and not in the realization of the objects of worldly enjoyment. He who, forgetting the true goal of life, God, remains absorbed in enjoyments, or in the attempts to obtain the objects of enjoyment, not only wastes idly this rare and invaluable human existence, but in exchange for nectar is accepting a dreadful poison.

Remember : as a fruit of many deeds of virtue, and through the grace of God, the Jīva obtains the human body, after going through many births. Enjoyment of the senses is obtainable when he takes birth in other species of beings as well, but the human body alone possesses the means of God-realization; attaining even this body, he who remains merged in the enjoyment of the senses, is worse than even a beast, so far as his ignorance is concerned.

Remember : if you have not realized God in this life — or at least, have not taken to the path of God-realization, your repentance will be so acute and intense that it will beggar description. Therefore, you should make the best use of your present opportunity by utilizing every moment with great care in the realization of the true goal of life, by devoting yourself to the practice of God-realization.

Remember: the world's wealth, glory, position, fame and honour, for which you are getting mad,— none of them will ever succeed in giving you satisfaction. Their incompleteness will never attain completeness; hence your sense of want will never be removed by them.

Remember: the ever new sins you commit, daily and hourly, for obtaining these objects of enjoyment, your idea that they contribute to your good, and the pride you feel in committing them, will be extremely fatal to you. You will never attain through them peace and happiness in life; on the contrary, your life will ever remain full of despair, sorrow, anxiety and grief. And after death, also, you will have to carry on your shoulders the heavy burden of your sins, which will compel you to pass through terrible sufferings in various forms, in your different lives in different species of beings.

Remember: he alone is wise, who does not allow his mind to get entangled in these enjoyments of the world, which are the very roots of sorrow, and who while remembering God, performs all his duties in the world, even as an actor faithfully plays his role on the stage in order to please his master. He alone, really speaking, is a man, in the true sense of the term.

Remember : you are a man; keep your manhood ever awake. Do not forget God even for a moment. Bear this constantly in mind that the Lord has not sent you to earth in this human form in order only to enjoy the senses like other animals. You have to attain that important success, which has so long eluded you. And that success is God-realization.

Remember : he alone is clever, who, making the attainment of this success as the goal of life, and constantly fixing his mind on God, performs all his duties in the world. Do whatever is necessary for you to do, for the sake of your livelihood; but do it bearing God in your mind, and keeping your attention fixed on the goal, or object of life.

Remember : great harm lies in accepting, or entertaining in the mind, an object or thing, which is opposed to God. Therefore, think only, perform only, what is good and auspicious. And that alone is auspicious which is favourable to God. Do not allow the eyes to see any evil or ugly sight and the dalliance of women; do not hear anything vulgar and ugly; do not allow the tongue to utter any inauspicious word. Use the eyes in seeing things, which have connection with God, and in seeing the saints; employ the ears in hearing the recital of the virtues of God; and through the tongue utter the Name of God and describe His glory, sports, abode, truth and greatness. When, alone, you do this, it will be possible for you to attain the success of life.

****

How To Sack Suffering And Sorrow

Why are you wasting this invaluable human existence like a blind man stumbling against obstructions here and there; why suffer from restlessness day and night persecuted by your sorrow ? All the eight watches of the day and night you sigh for happiness; whether asleep or awake, all the while you go on fluttering in your error, but have you discovered happiness anywhere ? Taking to be the source of happiness, whatever you seek to clasp to your bosom scorches you with the heat of sorrow. Wherever you may imagine happiness to lie, you strike against the rock of sorrow and get yourself bruised and your bones broken. In honour, fame, prosperity, authority over men, wife or husband, and children — have you discovered happiness anywhere ? In none of these you have found it. Everywhere you experience nothing but sorrow and suffering, nothing but fear and worry. Will happiness be found, then, if you retire altogether from association with these ?

But where will you retire ? Wherever you go, you will meet with the same experience. Therefore it is not necessary to retire. What is necessary is to realize the truth that supreme happiness lies only in God, and that God is everywhere, every moment and in every respect complete by Himself. When you will realize this truth, you will begin to see God in every place, in every moment of time and in all circumstances, whether favourable or unfavourable. Then alone you will realize true happiness, by finding God all around you, and in every moment of your life.

The reason why you are getting so helplessly scorched and burnt by the world's heat—why everywhere you see nothing but the naked dance of destitution, fear, sorrow and destruction, — is that you see the world as void of God. Wherever God is imagined to be non-existent, it is there that destitution, fear, sorrow and destruction come marching along with all their terrible troops and establish their camp. You cannot get out of the ring of these enemies, unless knowing God to be present everywhere, complete by Himself, you actually realize Him.

God is everywhere present, therefore, He is your eternal companion. Observing Him, make yourself happy and contented for all time. You can do this. Being the very embodiment of Truth you possess in full the right to realize Truth. Truth is, in fact, your very Self.

****

The Way To Eternal Peace

Remember: whatever is happening in this world with regard to you, all that is taking place according to the definite plan of a merciful, loving and just God, under His own auspicious dispensation. He is gracious, hence from the mainspring of His holy dispensation ever flow the waters of bliss. In every calamity, every adversity, illness, defeat, and what more, even in death, His benevolence is complete. When you cultivate this faith, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: God is your greatest friend; He is omniscient as well as almighty. You have no well-wisher equal to or greater than He, none who knows wherein lies your true good, none who can contribute to your true happiness. When you cultivate this faith, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: misery, dissatisfaction and sin, all these are rooted in desire. The root of desire lies in attachment. And the root of attachment lies in the sense of mineness with reference to the gross body and name. Regarding yourself merely as an instrument in the hands of God, if you renounce desire, attachment, mineness and self-love, you will at once gain peace.

Remember : so long as you remain identified with, or attached to, objects, actions and fruits of actions, your mind will not be free from desire, nor can you renounce the fruits of actions. Therefore, when realizing the glory of the Lord's divine state, you renounce mineness, attachment as well as desire, you will at once gain peace.

Remember : So long as your mind continues to wander among worldly objects and keeps running away from God, you will neither know peace, nor attain happiness. But when intensifying your spiritual practice, you succeed in exercising control over the mind, and engage it in the meditation of God, you will at once gain peace.

Remember : the practice of sin is extremely bad; but so long as man continues to regard sin as a deadly evil, he repents when he is compelled by circumstances to commit a sin, and tries to avoid sinful acts, and, finally, concluding that God alone is the saviour and supreme refuge, he calls aloud for God, the protector of the helpless, the redeemer of the fallen. For the repentant sinner, the Lord's doors ever remain open. Taking such a sinner under His own protection the Lord makes him His own, and the moment He does so, the sinner gets purified of sin, and becoming a virtuous soul, attains eternal peace. Therefore, depending wholly on God, if you also take to the practice of Bhajana, you will at once gain peace.

Remember : without knowledge of the truth about God, man can never cross the ocean of misery. For the attainment of this Knowledge, the first indispensable requisite is faith. Faith brings exclusive devotion to spiritual practice, and exclusive devotion to practice brings control over the senses. Therefore, when you develop faith in the Divine Being, and in the fact that the knowledge of the Divine Being is attainable by a practicant and, again, in your own qualification to attain the same, you will attain that knowledge and will at once gain peace.

Remember : exclusive surrender to God is such a glorious spiritual practice that it at once liberates man from every form of sin and distress, and makes him qualified for the attainment of supreme peace. Therefore, relinquishing dependence on all other sources of hope, all other supports, surrender yourself wholly to the Lord, — and thereby you will at once gain everlasting, eternal peace.

* * *

Turn to God.

Believe : God is a motiveless friend, and is supremely merciful; it is not His intention that the Jīva should seek Him after freeing himself from all evils, and making himself absolutely pure, and that only then the Jīva should be given shelter. God scrutinizes only one thing — whether or not the Jīva is seeking Him, knowing Him to be the sole refuge. If the Jīva truly seeks Him, God makes no mistake about giving him shelter, whatever may be the extent of the Jīva's sin and distress, however vicious his conduct and agony may be, howsoever depraved and afflicted he may be.

Believe : God's audience hall ever remains open to all; whoever seeks to enter it, — that is, seeks in the true sense of the term, — is admitted there, and once he enters there, his sin and distress, evil conduct and suffering, lapses and agony — all these are for ever destroyed, root and branch.

Believe : there is or was, or ever will be none, who is equal to God as your nearest and dearest, as the relative of your bosom giving you constant support, or as a master and friend, who never treats you contemptuously under any circumstances. Whatever love God bestows on others, He bestows equally even on one, who has no shelter or support in the world, who is wholly worthless and insignificant in the eye of the world and is neglected and treated with contempt, whom there is not only one to call as one's own, but none even to extend a propitious look moved by compassion.

Believe : whatever blunders you may commit, whatever deceptions you may practise, whatever indignities and insults you may hurl on Him — they make no difference in the natural flow of God's love. So long as you live turning your face away from Him, you remain deprived of the vision of His lotus-like face, full of sweet smiles and affection, you are denied the privilege of a plunge in the nectarean ocean of His love. However vast may be the time you may pass in this state, remember — the moment you turn your face towards Him, you will find that He has wholly forgotten all your crimes and deceptions, all your indignities and insults. Just as the mother's bosom is ever open to the child, even so you will find Him eager to press you to His bosom with the utmost love.

Believe : there is none so, unfortunate as the soul, who, notwithstanding all this, considers it a matter of pride to show its back to God. Sins and distress wait for him opening their jaws, and he can never expect to experience in life true peace and happiness in any circumstances whatsoever.

Believe : his life is truly luckless and a failure, even though from the point of view of the world he may appear an exceptionally fortunate soul, with the world's honour, prestige, praise and renown lying at his feet. The success of human life does not lie in the excess of worldy enjoyments, but in cultivating the spirit of surrender to God.

सुनहु उमा ते परम अभागी । हरि तजि होहिं बिषय अनुरागी ।।

"Hear, Umā, those souls are, indeed, most unfortunate, who, leaving God, become attached to the enjoyments of the world."

****

Have Faith In God's Omnipresence.

Remember : God is ever present everywhere. His presence is constant even in the deep recesses of your heart. Whatever you do lonely within the closed doors of your room, He knows and sees. What is there to wonder at in this ? He perceives even the most secret thoughts that flit through your mind, and of which even you are not always fully conscious. Nothing takes place anywhere at any time, which is outside God's awareness, outside His direct observation.

Remember : once you develop faith in this omniscience, this all-witnessing power of God, you will no longer be able, even secretly, to do any prohibited act. You will not be able to entertain any thought of sin even in the deep recesses of your heart. It is known to all that if a person about to commit some heinous act gets even the faintest idea that he is under the observation of a man of good position or a common sepoy, or even an ordinary human being, he will at once retrace his steps. He will feel diffident, ashamed and nervous to commit the act. But here all your acts are under the direct observation of the supreme Lord of all the worlds, the Chief of omniscients, the all-powerful God Himself. Under the circumstances, how can you commit a sin ? But when this takes place — when sinful thoughts cross your mind, and acts of sin are actually committed by you in word and deed, it has to be declared that you possess no faith in the omnipresence of God. The moment man develops faith in divine omnipresence, he gets freed from sin.

Remember : God is extremely merciful. You have no faith in His existence, and yet He does not feel offended with you, just as a mother does not feel offended with her child. Have faith in this mercy of the Lord, and seek this boon from Him that you may develop unshakable faith in His omnipresence, in his existence ever at every place

Remember : that the moment you develop faith in the truth that God is omnipresent, you will not only be freed from sin, but you will be fearless as well. When an ordinary member of the police accompanies a man, he sheds all fear of being molested by thieves and robbers. Therefore, when you will feel within you the presence of almighty God, the supreme sovereign of all the worlds, how can you suffer from fear, and whom will you fear ? Then, knowing God present with you in all circumstances, you will naturally rise above all fear.

Remember : the moment you develop faith in the existence of God, you will be free from all anxiety and care. For apart from being the supreme Lord of all the worlds and almighty, God is also your natural friend and well-wisher. And you constantly see Him with you, as very near you. When you have the companionship of a friend like God, what anxiety can take possession of you? That Supreme friend of yours will Himself think and decide, how, when and by what means, you will attain your good, and bring it about. There will be no error in His process of thought, for He is the Chief of omniscients; and He will certainly help you in the attainment of your object, for He is almighty, and moreover He will do this with pleasure, because such is the characteristic of a friend.

Remember: that the only reason why you commit sin either secretly or openly, why you get frightened by the thought of a ghost in a secluded place, why at every step you are dogged by fear, why the anxiety for the morrow consumes you day and night, is that you lack faith in the omnipresence of God, the almighty, the supreme Lord and the supreme friend. Have this faith, and easily get rid of all sin, fear, anxiety and care. See—what an easy process this is of getting rid of sin and distress.

* * *

Feel Always The Presence of God.

Believe : God is always with you and stands wholly at your elbow. At no time, and under no circumstances, He can leave you alone. You do not really believe in this, that is why you get frigtened and consider yourself helpless. Have faith that God is with you. He is omniscient, all-powerful, and He is your dearest friend. The moment you feel He is by your side, your fear will vanish and you will find yourself protected.

Believe : in the proximity of God, when you know yourself to be fearless and protected, no external danger, — however great it may be — which may confront you to serve some hidden purpose of God for your own good, will succeed in creating in your mind even the least amount of fear and sense of helplessness.

Believe : God's nearness will destroy all your weaknesses — all your evil thoughts. Then, you will no longer be guilty of any such improper conduct, any such sin, the fruit of which may bring you misery and distress. In spite of this, if you happen to face distress and danger in any form or shape, you will see in that nothing but the fulfilment of some auspicious divine purpose.

Believe : he who lives ever knowing that God is present near him can neither commit any act of evil, nor feel disturbed or depressed when (notwithstanding his not being guilty of such act) he has to face any danger, loss, infamy or obloquy. In all circumstances, obtaining the auspicious touch of the benign divine presence, he ever finds himself diving and swimming in the nectarean ocean of divine Grace.

Believe : whatever you already possess, whatever you are obtaining and will obtain, all that is within the sight of the Lord, who is your greatest friend and constant companion, — in fact, they are His own dispensation for you. If you feel agitated over them, or give expression to grief or misery, it will prove that you have no faith in the auspicious dispensation of God, who is the very embodiment of supreme auspiciousness.

Believe : whatever God regards as good for you, and whatever you obtain according to His dispensation (life or death, honour or dishonour, profit or loss, happiness or misery, prosperity or adversity) — therein lies your good. Whatever you seek, and what you regard as good, very likely may be full of evil for you. Therefore, surrendering yourself and your future completely in the hands of God, free yourself from every form of worry.

According to the dictates of your pure, Sattvic intellect, go on performing in the spirit of worship of God whatever duty may come before you. Be not careless in its performance. And never indulge in the thought, 'If this happened, I would have gained' or 'I have suffered a great loss because this did not happen.' Remember : whatever comes to pass in the end, that is the real thing, and therein lies your good.

Believe : God ever does what is only good; it is a different thing, if His procedure of work is not appreciated by you. But if you cultivate faith in Him, His method of work also will prove suitable to your taste, and what appeared unfavourable and terrible in the beginning will appear as favourable and pleasant. Then, seeing His auspiciousness even in death, you will get charmed and enamoured.

* * *

God Is Always With You.

Believe from the depth of your heart that God is Omniscient and Almighty, that He is the unfailing Friend of all, that He constantly stays with you and that His protecting hand is always ready to give you protection.

Believe from the depth of your heart that God is present within you, that His divine power lies hidden within you. If you desire, you may feel Him within you and may actually see Him and make yourself strong drawing your strength from His inconceivable store of strength.

Believe from the depth of your heart that when you have armed yourself with His strength, sin and misery, grief and affliction, distress and sorrow, illusion and worldly attachment have no power to come near you. To overcome you by bringing you under their influence will be a far cry, indeed.

Believe from the depth of your heart that sin and misery attack you only when you turn your eyes away from God and God's Power, when you lose the belief that He actually resides within you.

Believe from the depth of your heart that with the support of God's strength, you may easily overcome mental distress by mental peace, grief by joy, worldly attachments by dispassion, illusion by wisdom, darkness by light, dejection by gladness, despair by hope, fancy by direct perception, and all sense of want by experience of the sense of eternal divinity.

Believe from the depth of your heart that God is constantly and eternally present within you with complete Peace, complete Bliss, complete Knowledge, complete Enlightenment, complete Joy, complete Hope, complete Dispassion, complete Experience and His complete Being.

Believe all this and the moment you pray to Him, and remember Him, with this belief, you will find Him ready to make you His own. His spotless Light will light up the path of your life, and you will easily find yourself blessed with the sight of His sweet, enchanting and smiling face.

Believe that in this very life, during this very journey of life's pilgrimage, you can satisfy the unfulfilled desire cherished by you from eternity and can transform, through realization of God, your limited, finite, sorrowful existence of a Jīva into an existence which is by nature great, infinite, boundless and blissful.

****

Cherish Trust In God.

Remember : all worldly objects are perishable and devoid of happiness. He, who depends on them, and seeks to derive peace and happiness through them, is bound only to be disappointed and miserable. It is likely that for a limited period, due to ignorance, worldly objects may appear to one as quite sufficient for the purpose of happiness and peace; but a day will certainly arrive, when in the midst of difficulties, they will suddenly leave one in the lurch.

Remember : God alone is one who is everlasting, changeless, ever-existent, eternal, the embodiment of all glories, almighty, and the natural friend of all, depending on whom none will ever get disappointed, none will ever feel miserable. This faith in God lifts man up to that supremely high state of divine Mercy, Knowledge, Power and Love, where exists not even the least trace of any form of despair, unrest and misery.

Remember : he who possesses faith in God ever remains unaffected by whatever circumstances he may be faced with in the world; he feels no pleasure when the objects obtained and the circumstances met with are what is called 'favourable', nor Sorrow when they are what may be termed 'unfavourable'. The greatest of shocks fail to upset his equilibrium.

Remember : if after placing your trust in God, you still suffer from unrest and misery, you may take it for granted that there is somewhere some defect in your faith itself. Pray to God with confidence in your heart to remove that defect. Thus you will get over the defect, and all your misery and unrest will be rooted out.

Remember : after committing an error, if one does not immediately attempt to rectify the same, the error will stick to one permanently and become a part and parcel of one's character, and producing all sorts of fresh hindrances, will aggravate the darkness of despair, misery and distress. Whenever the darkness of despair makes its appearance, remove it at once with the help of the divine light, which is auspiciousness itself.

Remember : in the auspicious world of God, there is no place for either failure or despair. These come to us only when in the place of God, we begin to place our trust in worldly enjoyments. In that case, the fetter of our distress and misery fails to break, on the contrary it becomes all the more strong. Therefore, whenever you find even the distant glimpse of despair and failure staring at you, you should understand that your faith has changed its ground towards enjoyments, hence gathering it from there, join it to God again. Immediately you will find your heart will be filled up with strength and energy, and success will appear in front of you, almost within your grasp.

Remember : evils like doubt, fear, anger, jealousy, grief, dejection,anxiety, uneasiness, etc. make their appearance due to lack of faith in God. The moment one develops faith in God's greatness, all-comprehensive power, and friendliness or love, all these evils will disappear, just as darkness disappears at the rising of the sun.

Remember : as your best friend, always anxious to do you good, there is none like God, who ever knows everything, understands the very secret behind your pain and suffering and possesses the power to remove them, recognizes all your wants and is able to meet them in the best way possible, and responds to you as soon as you raise your cry for help. Leaving Him, you place your trust and confidence in others, herein lies your delusion — your ignorance — and this is the root of all your misfortune. When getting rid of this, you will recognize your Lord, that very instant all your distress and suffering will come to an end and you will feel blessed, realizing infinite and eternal happiness and peace.

****

Your Sincerest Friend Is God.

Believe : God is the storehouse of Power and Knowledge. He is your best friend and best lover. He is ever ready to do you good. The moment you develop true faith in Him, that very instant your weakness will disappear, fear will run away from you; and all your unfavourable circumstances will take a favourable turn.

Believe : and no sooner you develop this belief in God's justice and truth, there will subsist no trace of fear in your heart. You will feel that you are constantly living under the sheltering wing of that inconceivable Supreme Power. Your heart will get watered by the nectarean streams of God's auspicious and blessed Knowledge. There will be such an accession of zeal of the Sattvic kind that not a moment will be found by you to spend apart from the service of God.

Believe : the moment you develop faith in the friendliness of God, your life will turn over a new leaf. Your unrest will get transformed into constant peace. Selfishness will be changed into disinterested service. Intolerance will assume the form of tolerance, composure, generosity and liberality. Pride will be turned into humility, illwill into goodwill, criticism and censoriousness into appreciation and praise, hatred into love. The world will be found everywhere full of friends, full of well-wishers.

Believe: no sooner you develop faith in the friendliness and disinterested love of God, begging of Him will at once cease. Then, it will appear impossible to say, "Lord! satisfy this desire of mine: bring success to such and such of my practice at such and such a time." Then, in every dispensation of God, you will discover nothing but good and blessedness.

Believe: those who seek to compel God to do certain acts, and advise Him about the means of doing the same, do not really possess true faith in God. Their faith is nothing but a makebelieve. A man of true faith ever remains contented with whatever duties are placed before him by God, with the means given for doing the same, as well as with the fruits of such acts. Actuated by desire, selfishness and pride, the man of faith never acts as a fool to put obstacle in God's own ways by thrusting his own opinion on God. On the contrary, he follows with pleasure the path laid down by God, even though it may appear quite unfavourable, and accepts in a reverential spirit every gift coming to him from God.

Believe: that God alone possesses completely and truly the knowledge of wherein lies, and what constitutes, your true good; when, how and by what means that true good can be quickly realized by you; and whether it is in your interest to realize it quickly, or at some distant date. On your part, there are many an occasion when you regard the very evil as good, and want to realize it at such a time, in such a manner and by such means, that it can never really contribute to your welfare. Your clouded vision fails to see the reality. Just as a child out of its ignorance jumps to catch hold of fire or a snake, regarding them as objects of beauty, even so deluded men run after harmful things of the world. But he who like a small child depending on its mother, surrenders himself with complete faith to God, and hands over to God the entire responsibility for his security and satisfaction of worldly needs, God Himself decides for him what is conducive to his good, and when and by what means he should get it, and just at the right time supplies him with that auspicious thing.

* * *

Trust You Ever Belong To God

Remember : God is all auspiciousness. Whatever He does, He does for your good; even though you think it otherwise. All that you have to say—your wants, your complaints—confide them to Him. Approach Him with all sincerity and open your heart to Him; and stop looking to anybody else for help.

Remember : the worldlings will never lend a patient ear to your self-interested talk. They will only listen to that which concerns them. Your weeping before them, therefore, will bear no fruit. They will not listen to you; and if ever they do they will do so indifferently.

Remember : it is God alone who is all ears even to the meanest creature on earth and listens to everything it has to say about its weal or woe; and after listening to it He turns to make it happy. For God belongs to all; nay, He is the very Soul of the universe and the disinterested well-wisher of all. The happiness or sorrow of His creatures He treats as His own. And that is why in the Gītā the Lord says, "Having known Me as the disinterested well-wisher of all beings man attains peace."

Remember: God always counts you as His own; He does not care as to what you are. He marks only one thing, and that is whether you have faith in Him or not. If you trust Him and have faith in Him, He will do good to you of His own accord just as an affectionate mother always does to her child howsoever daubed he may be with filth and dirt.

Remember: the natural grace of God can be realized by reposing your exclusive faith and trust in Him. Hence cease expecting anything from any other quarter whatsoever. Do not cast wistful eyes towards anybody's grace or achievement; withdraw your attention completely from all other sides and fix your gaze on the unfailing grace of the Lord. Cry and weep before the Lord, your Supreme beloved, who never despises you in any circumstances, nor feels aggrieved on any account. The Lord is unfailing and incomparable in might and He forgets our egregious blunders and gets enamoured of insignificant virtues in us.

Remember: what can a mortal give you if ever he gets pleased with you? Can he satisfy all your wants? A man who is in the grip of want himself, afflicted with many a thirst, and who is being consumed with the fire of desire, what can he give you to relieve your wants, how will he be able to quench your thirst and put out the fire of your wants? Can one beggar remove the beggary of another beggar?

Remember : there is a small bird, known by the name of Chātaka, which never takes even a drop of water other than that brought down to it by the first cloud-burst during the ascendancy of the star Swātī (Arcturus) even though it may have to die without it. It never looks to any other source for water and remains steadfast to its vow. Now look at yourself. You are a human being endowed with intelligence and discretion; yet ignoring your Supreme friend, the Almighty and omniscient God, you go about knocking at others' door like a wantonly adulterous woman and, offering your heart to every Tom, Dick and Harry, look at him with eager eyes ! Do you not feel ashamed over this ?

Remember : all your worldly relations, your worldly possessions and your amenities of life will betray you at the time of need, so much so that you will be flabbergasted to see all that, and will beat your head over the thought of your gross blunder. But, alas, you will have no remedy left with you. Therefore, wake up before it is too late, and making God and His grace as the goal of your existence leave the bark of your life at His mercy. Work at the oars—perform your obligatory duties; but always centre your hope and faith in the Lord, who is your only companion that ever abides by you and never parts company with you.

* * *

Be One With Divine Grace.

Believe that depending on the power of Divine Grace, the practice you are following is the best spiritual practice for you, and that you are bound to attain success through it. Do not allow the doubt to cross your mind whether the practice is right or wrong; whether it will bring you success or not. Doubt stops one on the way, and faith leads one to the goal.

Believe and resolve that this time you have come to the world, assuming the human form, because you will assuredly obtain in this very life freedom from bodily bondage, which is born of Ignorance. It is due to Ignorance that you have been wandering uptil now from beginningless time. Now, you will no more wander; no more proceed in a desultory manner.

Believe that the total destruction of Ignorance, with all its roots, is the same thing as God-realization, and this God-realization is the final and supreme goal of human existence. And resolve that you have come to this world endowed with the qualification for God-realization, and that you will not rest till you have succeeded in attaining this goal.

Believe that the only strength behind your above qualification is Divine Grace. And that Grace you have in infinite and unlimited measure. You are, in fact, merged in the ocean of Grace. Therefore, you have no longer to worry about God-realization; for once you have merged yourself in the unfathomable ocean of Divine Grace, you have no worry about anything, nor is there any necessity for you to worry.

Believe that Divine Grace is the chief of all the Powers which are divine; and all Powers act in subordination to Her. He whom this great Power of Grace accepts as Her own not only realizes God, but gets blessed, indeed, in every way through the realization of God as the Whole in His Integral Form.

Believe that so long as you depend on your own exertion, on your own individual, independent and insignificant power, — you live under the spell of an Ego, which is worthless in value. And so long as the Ego continues to function, the operation of Divine Grace remains suspended. Grace demands complete dependence, full submission and total surrender. Give up yourself wholly with all your powers to God, who is the source and repository of all powers. Root out the Ego, prick the bubble it has formed, and let flow all the putrescence within it, and take shelter under the benign wings of Mother Grace. Then you will find, how soon and how easily and nicely, this your concluding life attains the fulfilment of its object.

Believe that Grace Divine is ever ready to call you Her own, to shower Her benedictions on you, and take you under Her sweet, cool, sheltering wings. She cares not to pry into your past history — and what sort of life you lived upto the present moment. Whether you are a man of virtue or a sinner, one endowed with the Sattvic or the Tamasic qualities, a Brahman or a Chaṇḍāla, a god or a demon, a Hindu or a Muslim, rich or poor, learned or unlearned —She judges only by what is within your heart. If truly despairing of all other means, you depend on Her and Her alone, She will at that very moment make you Her own, shower Her blessings on you from all sides, and giving you shelter under Her auspicious wings, will make you free from anxiety and fear, and lift you up towards disinterestedness. Then, not a single one of your desires will remain unfulfilled, but you will remain quite oblivious of both those desires and their fulfilment. Being dissolved in the holy waters of Grace, you will at that time attain holiness yourself, and become the very embodiment of blessedness itself.

Believe that Divine Grace is undoubtedly showering Her blessings on you; She ever showers Her blessings on every being and all are recipients of these blessings. You do not believe in this — have no faith in this, that is why you depend on other means; and that is why you remain deprived of your supreme wealth, which is an eternally re[illegible] birthright.

****

All Is Bliss.

Constantly remember, the Grace of God is ever being showered on you. You are always bathing in that shower, which reaches you from every side. Not a moment passes, when you are free from the benign action of Grace. Indeed, how can you remain free from that benign influence ? Are you not His dearest creation ? Shall we call it Grace, this feeling of affection for you in His heart, which comes by every moment as in a flood ? Believe, truly believe, — from the very time when you came linto existence — who knows in what immemorial He has kept you in His arms. Not even for a moment, He left you apart. His blessed hand is always above your head, and every moment you feel His sweet, soft touch.

You may ask — 'Why do I, then, suffer ? What is the cause of this fire of grief and sorrow in my heart, which is eating me day and night ?' True. But the answer to your question is — neither is there any fire, nor any burning; all this is only His sport. This feeling of burning in your heart and your question, this is also a part of the drama He is playing. Your wisdom and ignorance, joy and suffering, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, peace and unrest—and even you and I — all are incidents in the drama, which He is playing on the stage, which also is He Himself. The wonder of it is that the play and the Lord of the play are not different, but one and the same. He plays the drama on the stage, observes and enjoys it Himself, and smiles.

Your desire for happiness, your thirst for peace, your eagerness for union — all these are parts of His play. None can tell when this play of His started. Upto now no one has succeeded in tracing its beginning, nor will any one succeed in tracing it in the future. This play goes on for ever. Whoever has seen it, has seen it as a continuous process. The acts of the play, no doubt, change; it is not the same act which ever continues; but the play itself never comes to an end. When the Player is eternal how can the play be transient ? This is the reason why saints who know the Truth describe the sport of the Lord as beginningless and endless.

The creation we see before us, — with the processes of building and destruction that are going on within it the waves of peace and unrest that swell within it — also represents His Form. Now the Form is terrible, and now peaceful; like day and night, these are but two aspects of the same thing. Nothing happens here which is undesirable. All incidents are proper, blessed in character, favourable and what they ought to be. All are taking place just as they should take place. The whole of this creation and its happenings are an expression of His delight, — are the Divine Sport. They are His very Form.

Whatever is happening allow it to happen — it will not stop, even if you may try to stop it. Allow yourself passively to be swept along the current of His desire. Giving up the imagination of reaching a particular state, be at peace within yourself. Even now you are in that very current, only you do not know; that is why you differentiate between the terrible and the beautiful. Pray to the Lord that He may awaken you, may open your real eyes. Then you will directly perceive that you were never apart from Him, nor are you apart now, nor can be apart in future. Your own guise, His own Self, playing a role under His direction and according to His will. All is Bliss, all is Bliss !

* * *

Cultivate Love For God.

(*Sayings of Prahlāda, the great devotee*)

Life's real success lies in taking refuge at the feet of God; for God alone is the Lord, friend, the dearest lover and soul of all beings. Those who get entangled in sense-enjoyments fail to attain the lotus feet of God, which constitute supreme blessedness, or beatitude.

Therefore, so long as this human body, which is quite adequate for God-realization, does not fall a prey to death, get worn out by disease and grief, one should do one's best for attaining Bliss.

× × × ×

Love for the Divine may be easily developed through practices like devoted service of the Guru, who shows the path to God and guides one along that path, through offering to God whatever is obtained in the world, through the holy association of saints and lovers of God, through the worship and adoration of God, through faith in the divine stories, through the chanting of divine virtues and sports, through meditation on the divine feet, and through the sight and worship of the holy image of God.

Comprehending that Śrī Hari, the Supreme Lord of the Universe, is present in every being, try according to your capacity and power to satisfy the needs of all, and offer respects and honour to all from the very bottom of your heart.

He who, overcoming the six internal enemies of lust, anger, greed, delusion, arrogance and envy, practises devotion to God, as stated above, develops exclusive love for the lotus feet of God.

× × × ×

After the attainment of Divine Love, hearing about the unprecedented prowess exhibited by God through His manifested forms on earth, and about His incomparable virtues and conduct, when every hair of man's body bristles through excessive spiritual joy, his voice gets choked through tears of Love, and casting aside all reserve he begins to sing loudly and dance; when like a maniac, possessed by the influence of an unpropitious planet, he begins now to laugh, now to weep, now remembering the charming virtues and qualities of God begins to meditate on Him, and now falls at everybody's feet seeing God present in all beings: when, absorbed in God, he begins to utter through every breath "O Lord, O Master, O Beloved" — then, under the influence of this divine Love, all his fetters break and the constant thought of God transforms his mind into the very image of God. At this stage the very repository of the seeds of birth and death lying within him is entirely reduced to ashes, and the blessed soul realizes God.

× × × ×

Wealth, woman, cattle, children, palace, land, the lordly elephant, treasury and other forms of worldly prosperity; nay, the entire wealth and all objects of enjoyment of the world are transient. What happiness can they bring to man, who is subject to death?

× × × ×

For the cultivation of God's pleasure, birth as a Brahman, a god, or a Rsi, right conduct, wide knowledge, charity, penance, sacrifice, physical purity and performance of elaborate vows are not adequate. The Lord is delighted only by disinterested love and devotion; and the rest is nothing but pain and mockery.

Therefore, regarding all beings as the same as self, practise devotion to Śrī Hari, who is omnipresent, the soul of all, and the almighty, Supreme Lord.

The character of this devotion is such that under its influence, the demon, the Yakṣa, the Rākṣasa, the woman, the Śūdra, the cowherd, animals and birds, and even many sinners attained the divine state.

The greatest and highest interest of man in this world lies only in this that seeing always, everywhere and in every being the presence of God, he should practise exclusive devotion to Lord Govinda.

* * *

Be United To God.

Resolve that you are ever happy, brilliant, composed and healthy, because you ever live in God. You ever reside in Him, and whatever you do, you do according to the prompting of God.

Resolve that you are ever fearless and above anxieties and cares, for you ever see the presence of God with you and God is your guide and path-finder.

Resolve that whatever you will do, and whatever may be the fruit of that action, will be guided by God's thought, and will take place according to God's dispensation. God is the very embodiment of auspiciousness, therefore all that also will be full of auspiciousness, full of welfare.

Resolve that you know and regard God alone as the best and most glorious object, and no other object in this world can draw and attract your mind. No status of any importance can tempt you, nor can any terrible and cruel circumstances frighten you, or shake you from your faith.

Resolve that as you see one God alone present in every being, everything is supremely beautiful for you, and everyone is your dearest friend. You never look upon anyone as stranger, hence you are afraid of none is your mind.

Resolve that you crave to see everyone happy; for everyone represents God, the dearest object of your love.

Resolve that you can never utter any unbecoming word with reference to anybody and can seek injury to none, for you know that it would mean vilifying your own Lord, and seeking injury to Him alone.

Resolve that you will ever attempt to make all beings happy through body, mind and speech; that everywhere, and under all circumstances, you will throw the seed of good action and will pray to God that the seed may sprout soon, and yield flowers and fruits, so that the entire world — all the different forms of your own Lord — may constantly experience nothing but joy and happiness.

Resolve that you will ever remain firmly established in Truth. At no time, and for no reason whatsoever, you will deviate from Truth; for the Lord, who is the supreme support of Truth, and ever the embodiment of Truth, remains pleased through Truth alone. Untruth brings displeasure to the Lord, hence though through error it may appear helpful in driving away danger and conducive to happiness. in reality, it is the precursor of the worst form of misfortune and nothing but the destroyer of happiness.

Resolve that you will ever devote your time to the remembrance of the Lord. How can you forget Him who is your support, your prop, your soul, your life, your very breath, your all-in-all and without whom the very 'I' in you has no existence ? Forgetting Him, how can you live ?

Resolve that you ever belong to the Lord, and the Lord ever belongs to you. This relationship between you and Him can never be snapped. If you get separated from Him, your very existence comes to an end, and if the Lord gives you up, He ceases to be the Lord.

****

Seek God With All Your Might.

Believe that God is always with you. Nowhere, and at no time whatsoever, He leaves you alone. At home or in the forest, in the day-time or at night, awake or asleep — He constantly stays with you. Believing thus, you can yourself experience this truth, and no sooner you experience this all your anxieties will vanish, and you will become fearless.

Believe that God's propitious hand, guaranteeing safety and protection, is lying on your head. You do not believe in this, hence you fail to experience it.

Believe that what you consider to be inauspicious and unpropitious, disagreeable and unlucky, undesirable and worthy of rejection, the cause of misery and torture — in that also the natural flow of friendliness emanating from God is functioning. Due only to want of faith in this natural friendliness of God, you fail to realize God's Grace and Love and see Him in the relationship of the Friend, and that is why, puzzled and confounded, you drive yourself deeper and deeper into the ocean of misery and distress.

Believe that God is full of Grace and full of Love; indeed, the very embodiment of Grace, the embodiment of Love. Whatever you receive from Him is truly speaking nothing but His Grace and Love. From the ocean of nectar what can you receive but nectar ?

Believe that just as ferocious beasts like lion, snake and bear made of sugar are really nothing but sugar, though their forms may be similar to those ferocious beasts, even so whatever takes place for you through God's dispensation represents nothing but God's Grace and Love, although the external form of it may be quite terrible to look at.

Believe that they are, indeed, supremely blessed souls who seeing constantly everywhere, and in every act, and in the fruit of every act the play of God's causeless Grace and Love ever remain not only fearless and free from anxiety and care, but at the sight of that motiveless Grace and Love experience at every step supreme bliss and a unique peace. Under no circumstances, do they either suffer from mental agony, or ever deviate from their state of bliss. That is why they can neither be drawn by any other form of happiness, nor the greatest suffering can make them grieve.

Believe that he, who, placing his faith and reliance on the scriptures, and in the sayings of saints, attempts constantly to feel the causeless Grace and

Love of God, will some day or other be delighted without fail at the direct experience of God's natural Grace and Love.

Believe that he who with a sincere heart proceeds towards God, ever attempts to advance on the road to God, spares not himself to the best of his power: on the contrary, with hope and enthusiasm at every step, and with faith in God's Grace, attempts to advance according to his ability and power, — God adds to his power, endows him with wisdom and light, and extending the helping hand takes him to the eternal, supreme Divine Abode, the Abode of Knowledge and Consciousness. His existence as a Jīva is thus fulfilled for all time.

* * *

Instal God Within Your Heart.

Remember : virtues like Truth, Ahiṃsā, Brahmacharya, etc, cannot flourish without the support of God, even as the senses cannot function in the body without the presence of the life-force. Without the support of God, virtues produce pride, which is the destroyer of all virtues and the very source of vice, and which, bringing in its train all the evils allied to it, drives away virtues from the heart.

Remember : pride never gives man the opportunity to see his own defects and keeps him always blind, on account of which he cannot tolerate even the slightest criticism of his conduct, however well-founded it may be, and even though it may be highly beneficial to him; and hence naturally he becomes the very embodiment of vice.

Remember : he who due to self-conceit craves only for worldly honour falls a prey to a weakness which produces a festering wound in his heart. And, then, due to that craving for honour, hiding all the heinous impulses of his heart and atrocious conduct, — sins, evils, low selfishness, ingratitude, meanness, propensity to misappropriate another's wealth and envy of another's happiness, — nobody knows how many fresh yarns of falsehood he may go on spinning, how many nice deceptions he may create, and how bravely he may hold forth in order to prove that he is an honourable man; which instead of bringing him honour leads to further aggravation of the internal ulcer, as a result of which, finally, he reaches a state when writhing in terrible agony, he has to give vent to his cry of distress, but there remains no easy way to give him relief at that stage.

Remember : he who hides his own transgressions and attempts to ascribe thousands of ever new evils to another, is an extremely unfortunate soul. He can never expect to develop virtues in him. If it is your intention to invite the virtues and lodge them permanently within you, instal God, the ocean of all virtues, within your heart.

Remember : the moment God reveals Himself within one's heart, vices disappear, even as darkness disappears with the rising of the sun. There are occasions when the sun may disappear from view, but God when once revealed in a heart, never again disappears. Once He comes and occupies a heart, He does not go out of it even if one should attempt to drive Him out.

Remember : of vices alone, the effect is misery. When vices disappear, misery will also automatically disappear. And when virtues make their appearance, their natural effect, happiness or joy, will automatically appear. In addition, in the abode of God, virtues being natural, the greatest gain will be that they will never be lost, and the happiness gained will be everlasting and infinite.

Remember : happiness or bliss does not, in reality, lie in any virtue, nor is it the effect of any virtue. It lies naturally in God, even as light and heat naturally lie in the sun, which thus automatically destroys darkness and cold and gives birth to both the power of sight and sprightliness. Virtues which are unconnected with God are no virtues in the real sense of the term. They are just nothing but false imitations, like the toys e.g. mango, guava, orange and apple made of earth and coloured like fruits. Externally they no doubt look like fruits, but internally they are nothing but earth and earth alone. Even so, virtues which are devoid of God are nothing but figments of the brain. Understand this fact well, and comprehending it properly make constant attempts to instal God within your heart.

Remember : God is no doubt present in every heart; but you do not believe in this, hence the ever present God cannot manifest Himself there. That is why virtues do not stay, and vice with all its allied evils goes on extending its sway. By means of Bhajana acquire faith, and then look within with the eye of faith, you will immediately find God manifested within you. And no sooner He is manifest, you will find yourself happy and contented from every point of view.

* * *

Take Refuge In Him.

Believe : God is always nearest to you; He is aware of all the circumstances that confront you, and hears every one of your cries. The delay lies only in raising the cry with firm faith and belief. He will, indeed, hear your cry instantaneously and remove your distress.

Believe : God is your greatest friend, the nearest and dearest relative. Hearing that you are in distress, He cannot remain indifferent. Raise your cry, sincerely feeling at the bottom of your heart that He is your greatest friend. Instantaneously you will get a hearing, and, through God's grace, you will cross the ocean of your misery.

Believe : God is supremely merciful. However great may be your trespasses, — you may be the worst sinner and the most despicable soul, — He cannot look down upon you. Be convinced about this, and raise your plaintive cry. That very moment, He will remove all your difficulties.

Believe : God is your supreme support. You may be forgotten by the entire world; all your friends and relatives, the nearest and dearest ones, may turn their backs on you; you may find yourself entirely devoid of all support; but with implicit faith in His character as the supreme support and refuge, remember Him within your mind. You will find by experience how soon you obtain the sweetest and most assured shelter.

Believe : God is almighty. Howsoever great may be your suffering; — the difficulties which face you may be as insurmountable as the highest mountain; — the calamity which stares you in the face may be quite irrevocable; yet they are quite insignificant before the power of God. With full faith, raise your cry to the Almighty. His power will immediately come to your aid, and that very moment all your misery and suffering will disappear like a cloud before a storm.

Believe : God is the supreme Lord of all the worlds — the supreme God of gods. You may find yourself under the evil influence of the most unpropitious planets; the worst Prārabdha may appear before you to yield its fruit; the greatest of gods and demons may threaten your very existence; but if you raise your cry to God, they will all disappear out of sheer fright. For, they are all slaves of God. They can exercise their power only on him who does not raise his cry to God, with full faith that He is the supreme Lord of all the worlds.

Believe : God is the saviour of the fallen and the degraded sinner. Just as the sun's inherent property is to drive away darkness; — howsoever thick and gloomy the darkness, it disappears a good time before the rising of the sun, even so sins get destroyed through the very semblance of the Divine Name. Have faith in this truth, and take refuge under the Lord's Name. You will then realize how, in the twinkling of an eye, sins will get destroyed. And when sins are destroyed, it is certain that afflictions will disappear. For, sins are the root-cause of the three-fold forms of affliction.

Believe : God is a source of terror even to Death, and is the dispeller of the fear of His devotees. The god of Death, Yama, is afraid of Him; but the Lord keeps His devotees ever above fear. Howsoever you may be frightened by internal enemies like hypocrisy and egoism, lust and anger, greed and infatuation, pride and jealousy, etc., or by external enemies like failure and destruction, disease and distemper, man and demon, the crawling snake and the prowling beast, the moment you raise your cry with full faith in His character as the dispeller of the fear of His devotees, that very moment those enemies will run away from you, and you will rise above fear.

Believe : God is supremely generous. You may be the poorest of the poor, the meanest of those suffering from abject poverty; but if you raise your cry from the bottom of the heart turning the inner eye of faith on the **Lord of the Goddess of Prosperity, He will** immediately enrich you, removing all your wants, poverty and distress.

Believe : God is the very embodiment of Rasa, the very embodiment of Love. You may possess a heart as dry as the plywood and the worst form of dullness may encompass your soul; you may treat the realm of Divine Love as something beyond your imagination; but if, with a heart full of faith in Him as the embodiment of Love, you solicit Him for Divine Love, He will grace you by the gift of that Love which is so difficult to attain.

Believe : God is the sole basis of Mokṣa, or Liberation, He is the very embodiment of Liberation. Through the more remembrance of His Name and Form, all forms of worldly bondage disappear, all the fetters break and fall. Take refuge in Him with a determined heart, and cry for Him inspired by the spirit of true surrender; in a trice, the strongest of fetters that hold you in bondage will break, and attaining God's invaluable state as the embodiment of Mokṣa, you will have the object of your life fulfilled.

****

Realize God Through Purity Of Heart.

Believe that he who seeks to do his own good at the cost of injury to another is suffering from a great delusion. One's true good and real welfare lies only wherein lies the good and welfare of others. Hence before committing an act, examine carefully whether the effect of it will produce any harm to anybody—at the same time, consider whether it will contribute to others' good. If it does not lead to others' good, then knowing that it cannot bring any blessings to you, withhold your hand from the act.

Believe that the whole of this animate and inanimate world is a manifestation of God, or that God alone permeates the whole of it. Understanding this, ever try to render service to all to the best of your ability, according as it is due from you. Service is that which is pleasant as well as beneficial to the object of service.

Reflect that when everything is God, or God is in everything, who can be a stranger to you? All are but manifestations of the life of your life. Your own beloved Lord — and all are objects of your service.

How can there be enmity and strife, hatred and malice, deceit and hypocrisy with any of them ? How can there be the least thought of injury to them ?

Believe that enemies, like lust, anger, greed, delusion, arrogance, jealousy, enmity, strife, pride, egoism, etc., residing in the heart of one, who practises to see God in everything, die a natural death. Automatically one's heart gets filled up with the purest divine ideas and sentiments like sacrifice, forgiveness, contentment, discrimination, humility, delight and love, which act as the best and truest of friends.

Believe that God manifests Himself only in the heart, which is filled up with divine ideas and sentiments; it is in that centre alone that one obtains a vision of the Lord's enchanting and fascinating presence.So long as the heart is full of vices and evil thoughts, God cannot reveal Himself there.

Believe that the object of your present birth as a human being is to obtain freedom from the bondage of Māyā and realize God, i.e. spiritualizing and making divine every fibre of your being. Gain the Love and unbroken direct nearness and contact of the Supreme Person, or Puruṣottama. Instead of this, if subordinating yourself to your enemies, the robbers like lust, anger, etc., you forget the noble object of human existence and devote yourself only to worldly enjoyments, and due to attachment to such enjoyments go on adding to your heap of sins, — far from realizing the divine heritage, you will be deprived of even the privilege of human existence, and will be forced to take birth not only in demoniacal wombs, but will be driven into wombs which are still inferior. Are you prepared to accept this vile state as the fruit of your present life ? If not, beware, take caution even now, and exert yourself as best as you can for the fulfilment of the goal. Remember — the time at your disposal is extremely short, there are many and varied temptations before you, and no limit to adverse circumstances to keep you entangled in the world and make you forget your goal of life. Give up the pursuit of the will-o'-the-wisp, in the form of the idle hope that you will devote yourself to the realization of the goal of life after you have solved your worldly difficulties. In whatever position you are, whatever may be the circumstances, devote yourself then and there to the realization of the goal, without caring for anything else. The circumstances will change of their own accord. Make this resolve within your mind that this alone is your first and foremost duty.

Believe that if your resolve is sufficiently strong, your desire exclusive and your faith complete, you will attain success, even within the every short time at your disposal, *viz,* the days of life yet left to you. In a dark room kept closed for years, the darkness disappears the moment the sun's rays enter. The darkness does not argue that as it occupied the room for such a length of time, it would tarry a little while longer. No, the moment light enters, darkness is dead and gone : this is the time required ! Even so, the moment exclusiveness and strength of resolve, desire and faith are attained, there is revelation of the divine Light. That very instant, the darkness coming down from eternity disappears. Hence exert yourself — with fulness of faith in your heart.

* * *

In God Abide.

Resolve : God is ever present within my mind. All His divine virtues and thoughts are moving like waves within my mind. Henceforward I shall not allow any other thing, any other evil idea or thought, to enter my mind.

Resolve : I shall see everywhere God and God's own auspicious sentiments. I shall ever keep my mind engaged in noble thoughts, and the words that will come out of my lips will ever express the glory of the Lord, will be ever true, sweet and holy words, the underlying motive of which is to render good to all, and make everyone happy.

Resolve : I shall never commit any act, which will not be the cause of pleasure to the Lord. I shall ever do what is pleasant to Him, with the object of rendering service to Him. I shall ever crave for such deeds only as will bring happiness to God, and all beings of this world, who are His manifested forms.

Resolve : Apart from good thoughts and good deeds, I shall never find time to indulge in any other form of thought and deed. My mind and body will ever remain engaged in God's service. I shall not tolerate even a moment, which is not devoted to service.

Resolve : None can inflict any calamity on me; none can do me any evil. For my Lord alone ever lives in every being, and whatever takes place with regard to me, caused by whomsoever it may be, takes place only for my good, according to the auspicious dispensation of my Lord.

Resolve : None, or no incident, in this world can make me hopeless and sad, for God, who is my supreme well-wisher and friend is naturally engaged in my good.And when the almighty Lord, who is everywhere present, is engaged in that work, there should be no place for doubt about success, and no scope for despair and dejection.

Resolve : When in this auspicious world of God, there is no place for evil, why should I invite evil by unnecessarily thinking of evil ?

Resolve : When God, my Lord, is within every being, all are essentially good, both within and without. Then, detecting evil in a person, why should I kill this truth ?

Resolve : When good and good alone, bliss and bliss alone, are ever present everywhere, I shall ever remain merged in bliss. I shall not allow any external circumstances pertaining to life and death, gain and loss, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour, praise and blame, to disturb that state of eternal, unalloyed bliss.

Remember : Whatever misery, misfortune, calamity and evil you see in this world is due to the fact that you do not always see everywhere the presence of God, the eternal embodiment of auspiciousness and bliss. Whatever you see here externally is nothing but the different disguises of God, the embodiment of good. They are nothing but the various scenes of His sport. Behind them all — God, the embodiment of eternal bliss, possessed of the colour of a cloud, is ever present.

Remember : You think of evil, hence you suffer from misery. If you see deeply within a thing or idea, which is spoken of and regarded as the worst form of evil, you will find God, who is supremely good and the embodiment of supreme bliss, concealed even there. Wherever you go, wherever you cast your look, try to see the Lord alone. With your sharp look try to discover only Him. Know Him, and derive the supreme joy of life.

****

Act For The Sake Of God

[1]

Remember : that the love you bestow, out of ignorance, on your body, wealth, wife, master, children and other relations, does not require any the less sacrifice on your part, but you do not derive profit commensurable with it. What you derive is only misery, bondage and despair. If, instead of being prompted by delusion, you bestow the same love on God,—if the same sacrifice you undergo in the spirit of rendering service to God—you may derive the greatest benefit from it.

Remember : that love, affection and sacrifice, when centred on an object of enjoyment, constitute Attachment, and when centred on God, constitute Bhakti or Devotion.

Remember : that Bhakti finds no place in the heart of a man who is attached to enjoyments and moved by desires. So long as his desires are not fulfilled, fire continues to burn within his heart; and if once his desire is fulfilled, it leads to an aggravation of the fire. That is why the Goddess of Devotion runs away from his heart. Renunciation of worldly desires is therefore, indispensable for the attainment o Devotion.

Remember: that when the object of desire is changed and purified, it will be automatically transformed into Love. Desire, the underlying motive of which is satisfaction of the senses, is called 'Kāma' (Lust), and the desire of which the underlying motive is cultivation of the pleasure of God is known as 'Prema' (Love). Instead of satisfaction of the senses, the object of desire should be satisfaction of God. When such becomes the case, lust will be transformed into Love, and will get purified.

Remember: that in Love, there remains no desire, apart from the desire to please the object of Love. If there remains any other desire, it is not Love, but Attachment, masquerading in the name of Love. The devotee, who lives in the domain of Love, offering to God whatever he possesses, makes God his very own. His wealth, house, children, wife, name, fame, etc., all become God's, and God becomes His. Therefore, in that state whatever he does, he does only for God, the object of His Love.

Remember: that whatever you are doing according to your place in the Varṇāśrama order, it is not necessary to abandon the same. If you are engaged in the service of wife, children and other members of the house, you may, indeed, continue to do the same; but do it for the sake of God's pleasure. When all your acts will thus be performed for the sake of God, sin and evil will automatically go out of them, for, then, you will do only such acts as may be liked by God, and God approves only such acts as are sanctioned by the scriptures, untainted by sin, and conducive to universal good and welfare.

Remember: that duties, enunciated by the scriptures can be truly performed only by one who acts for the sake of God, who constitutes the soul of the scriptures, and is the central Truth established by them; for such a doer loses all separate, selfish interests. The lust for enjoyment leaves him altogether. Acts prohibited by the scriptures take place due to selfish interests and desire for enjoyment. When action is performed not for self-gratification, but for the sake of God alone, there is no reason why it should go against the scriptures? The action of such an actor should, indeed, truly follow the instructions of the scriptures.

Remember: that he who works only for the pleasure of God serves the world in the true sense of the term, for he has no personal interest to serve through his actions. Action is poisoned only by selfishness. Where there is selfishness, one may talk as glibly as possible on renunciation, but true renunciation will not arise within him. Hence the poison does not go out of such action. Blameless, poisonless action alone can bring about the world's good.

[2]

Love for spiritual practice, want of tiredness in spiritual practice, reverence for great souls who sacrifice all self-interest, and faith in God—these are the prominent marks which indicate the spiritual progress of an aspirant. The aspirant possessing these marks moves with giant strides in the spiritual field.

Regarding the pursuit of spiritual life for God-realization as the primary function of life, be in the world in your physical body, but let the mind remain constantly at the feet of God.

Mere study of books will be of no avail to you, nor will you practically gain anything by indulging in tall talks about spirituality. You will have to make the effort yourself for fixing the mind on God.

The best use of time lies in spending it in remembrance of, and meditation on God and in singing or chanting the Divine Glory.

'Remember : A Mahāpuruṣa or superman is he on whom except God himself no person, no circumstances, no incident, no time can produce any effect, that is to say, who having surrendered himself to God remains constantly and completely merged in Him. You also should try to free yourself from all other influences, and keep yourself completely under the influence of God and God alone.

Let God be your sole acquaintance and friend;

forget all other worldly acquaintances. And when you act, act only for the pleasure of God.

Seek nothing but God Himself. Do not entertain even the idea that as God is omniscient, all-powerful, He will Himself look after your wants. Let there be no sense of want in your mind except for God; let there be no thirst for anything else.

That practicant is blessed, indeed, who has developed these four things—faith in God, sense of want for God only, craving for God and the idea that God Himself is the means of spiritual effort, then he is the practicant who remains wholly merged in the intoxication of Divine Love, who has no other craving, no other sense of want.

He who acts only for divine pleasure would not care for popular praise, fame and honour; he would not want that his biography should be written, or that a memorial should be raised in his honour. Desires of this type take possession only of those who are slaves to the world and who mislead themselves by falsely assuming the role of a devotee.

Avoid contact and acquaintance with men of the world. Try your best that they may forget you, and you may forget them: Then, there will remain but two—you and God—for mutual contact and acquaintance. In that state, quietly serve the Lord, and let God accept your service. God does not accept the service of one who serves for demonstration before others.

Give up the idea that you have any responsibility for reforming the world. God will reform it Himself. So far as you are concerned, offer yourself wholly as a sacrifice at the Lord's feet. With great humility of heart stand quietly at the gate of that Friend of the friendless.

Remember: He who wants to be known to the world and seeks the companionship of men of the world, wants to be at a distance from the Lord, and seeks to give up the companionship of the Lord. The more you extend the circle of your worldly acquaintances, the further removed you will be from God.

He who having renounced enjoyments and put on the garb of a devotee wants to advertise himself and his religious practices is like an unchaste woman who, though wedded to a qualified husband, goes about demonstrating her feminine beauty with a view to attract others.

****

Sluggishness Opposed To Godliness

Remember : inaction is neither dependence on God nor even dispassion. Complete submission to God makes one's life strenuously active in His service. A servant of God is never sluggish; he remains always busy in the service of the Almighty with increasing zest and zeal.

Remember : idlers and those who shirk work often seek to dissemble or justify their indolence and inactivity under the masquerade of submission or dispassion; but, really speaking, it is nothing but transgression on their part.

Remember : he who has delivered himself to God will, for the sake of His pleasure, meticulously devote every moment of his life to pursuits which are agreeable to Him. He will indeed have no respite from the service of the Lord. He will keep his sense-organs, mind and intellect incessantly engaged in doing service to Him.

Remember : they who choose to remain idle or drowse away their time or revel in transgression under the pretence of submission to God deceive themselves. Inactivity is a gross form of Tamoguṇa (darkness), whereas submission to God is the fruit of Sattva (the quality of goodness). These two can never converge.

Remember : those who are imbued with the spirit of dispassion nurse no attachment in their heart for any object of enjoyment either of this world or of the next, nor do they crave for anything; while they are extremely steadfast in their spiritual practice, Sādhanā. As long as there is attraction for the world one does not fully betake oneself to the path of God-Realization. Attachment towards the world repeatedly drags the mind towards sense-enjoyments. When, however, worldly attachment yields place to dispassion, one gets completely absorbed in the striving for God-Realization. How, then, can there be any room for inactivity in such circumstances ?

Remember : we start with an inquiry as to what is worth discarding, and what is worth acquiring; what is rooted in sorrow, and what is of the nature of bliss; what is transient, and what is eternal; what is unreal and what is real; what one has to get rid of in one's life and what one has to attain. After a critical examination when one comes to the definite conclusion that God alone is worth choosing — that He alone is of the nature of abiding bliss, that He alone is eternal and true, and the one ultimate goal of human existence — and that apart from Him all other enjoyments whether of this world or of the other, are worth spurning, because they are rooted in sorrow, and are perishable and so unreal and that they have to be completely abandoned, there develops in the heart an affinity for Him and an automatic aversion from the objects of enjoyment. Through such dispassion one acquires the sixfold riches, *viz,* Śama (control of mind), Dama (subjugation of the senses), Titikṣā (endurance), Uparati (indifference towards sense-enjoyments even when available), Śraddhā (uniquestioning faith in God, in His realization as well as in the words of saints and scriptures that unfold the means of realizing Him) and Samādhāna (eradication of all doubts).

Remember : when one has acquired these sixfold riches there well forth in the heart a burning desire for final beatitude — God-Realization. At this stage the striver forgets everything else and betakes himself with a firm resolution to spiritual practices. His mind and senses, intellect and reason, all turn introvert and unflinchingly take to the path of God-Realization. Hence those who resort to inactivity under the name of dispassion are absolutely deluded.

Remember : in a state of resignation to God, a devotee's life is uninterruptedly and absolutely dedicated to the service of God. And with the upsurge of dispassion he gets absorbed in and becomes one with his striving for God-Realization. Inactivity or sloth is out of the question in either case.

Remember : the actions performed by such strivers are dissimilar to those of sensual persons. The actions of the voluptuous lead to bondage, whereas the actions of these strivers secure liberation from the bondage of action. That is why actions of the latter do not go by the name of actions but are known as 'disinterested service', 'Devotion' or 'wisdom'.

****

Climb The Ladder of Divine Love.

Remember : Love is the fountain of all divine qualities. Where there is Love, qualities like sacrifice, goodwill, tolerance, forgiveness, generosity, liberality, friendliness, non-violence, service, straightforwardness, open-heartedness, disinterestedness, joy, truth, confidence, courage, courtesy, etc., automatically make their appearance. And contrary to this, where there is selfishness, there is fear; and where fear is, mean impulses like the sense of possession or the grasping spirit, illwill, intolerance, desire, anger, miserliness, niggardliness, jealousy, enmity, deceit, hypocrisy, sadness, unbelief, hatred, greed, knavery, cowardliness, etc. spring up as a natural consequence.

Remember : where there are divine qualities, there exist natural happiness, delight, joy and the friendly spirit; and where the qualities are demoniac, there remain grief, sadness, misery and the unfriendly spirit.

Remember : the more the Love becomes pure, the more will it turn Godward; and where there is divine Love, fearlessness and the sense of security will grow to such an extent that in the performance of duty, in the utterance of truth, in doing good to others, in rendering service sacrificing his all, and in facing the greatest trials of life. man will not experience the least amount of fear. While remaining strong-minded, wise, powerful, brave and heroic, he will be, at the same time, exceptionally humble, polite, sweet in words, judicious in action, and peaceful by nature. He will cause not the least injury to another. He will be wholly unselfish, possessed of faith in God, ever depending on God's grace, and constantly merged in an ocean of joy.

Remember : that the lover of God either sees God present in everything, or sees the whole world in God. That is why naturally he becomes fearless, respectful, lover of the universe, universal friend and large-hearted by nature. He will bear enmity towards none; neither will he possess attachment for any particular object of the world. He will ever remain engaged in God's work, possessed of a heart overflowing with devotion, and extremely devoted to God.

× × × ×

Believe : that there is no fear, possessed of so much power, that it can stand against the infinite power of Divine Grace.

Believe : that there is no sin, possessed of so much power, that it can withstand the devotion to God.

Believe : that there is no anguish, possessed of so much power, that it can persist in the face of soothing influence of Divine Love.

Believe : that God's infinite grace is showering on you, that is why the spirit of devotion is undulating in your heart, and you feel as if you are getting submerged in the ocean of Divine Love. Then, how can there be any place for fear, sin and misery ? Know that they are already destroyed ! So long as you are tormented by sin, misery and fear, you should know that you have not truly developed faith in Divine Grace. The Lord Himself has proclaimed that he who cultivates faith in Him easily crosses the ocean of difficulties through His grace.

Believe : that you are God's own, and God is yours. There is none in this world who is nearer to you than God. You can never imagine what an amount of care He is ever bestowing on you.

Believe : that God will quickly forgive all your faults, and will take you up as His own, for ever, aye, for ever. May you but once cry out for this with an open heart, placing your complete trust in His friendliness and love !

* * *

What Invites God's Pleasure ?

Remember : within all the inanimate and animate beings of the world there dwells the Lord both as their soul and inner controller. I It is God Himself who is manifested in all those forms. Therefore it is your sacred duty to serve them, gratify them and do good to them.

Remember : if you bear malice and enmity towards the beings of the world, sting them to the quick by speaking harsh words to them, reproach and insult them in a fit of anger or through sheer vanity and deprive them of their rights, God will never be propitiated by your external worship and generosity.

Remember : if you rob people of their money by deception or fraud, cheat others by sweet words, and suppress the poor and the helpless by dint of your authority and power, God will never be pleased by mere externalities.

Remember : if you exploit the helpless and the weak by intimidating or coaxing them, dispossess your poor neighbours of their home and hearth by using the influence of your power, affluence and position and conspiring with the authorities deceive simple-hearted people, God will never be pleased by your position and prestige, leadership or empty religiosity.

Remember : if you defraud the widows of their money, reproach and insult them, ill-treat them and violate their chastity by your soft words, God will never be pleased with your sacred mark on the forehead and rosaries, your khaddar clothes or your outer garb of a servant of the people.

Remember : if you harbour in your mind hypocrisy and arrogance, enmity and hostility, anger and visilence, pride and vanity, fraud and chicanery, partiality and prejudice etc. and keep up the appearance of a 'sadhu', God will not be pleased by your sham piety and your didactic exposition of the scriptures.

Remember : no outward show, no particular kind of dress or sermonizing, no masquerading and no posing as a saint is required in order to please God. What is needed for His pleasure is a guileless heart full of godly virtues like non-violence, truth, greedlessness, contentment, compassion, non-stealing, absence of pride, hypocrisy and attachment, love, continence, non-possession, modesty, magnanimity, sweetness, sobriety, fortitude, endurance, purity, faith, religious scruple, forgiveness and guilelessness and above all this there should dwell in the heart a motiveless and unalloyed devotion to God.

Remember : human life has been granted to us for a very short period and has been vouchsafed for pleasing God and thereby realizing Him. If this object is not achieved in this very life and if it is frittered away in the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures alone, not only will our life have been spent in vain but a large stock of sins will be accumulated which will continue to torment us till eternity.

****

Look Within.

Remember that bliss, true bliss is within you, and that it is everlasting. You seek this perfectness of joy in external things — in wealth, in power over men, in honour, fame, enjoyment, comfort, luzury and in the family—therein lies your error.

Remember that happiness does not consist in any particular circumstances of the world. You think that you will be happy when your circumstances take a particular shape, when you will possess so much money and such worldly power, when you will get a son and your fame will spread throughout the world and people will begin to show you honour — herein lies your error.

Remember that the cause of your present misery and lack of happiness does not lie in any external circumstances : its main cause lies in the lack of knowledge about true, everlasting and internal joy — the want of constant feeling of the nearness of God, the embodiment of Bliss.

Remember that when your mind will turn inwards, when you will begin to feel the eternal and constant nearness of that solidified form of Existence, Sentience and Bliss, when you will attain permanent unification with that solidfication of Existence, Sentience and Bliss, no external circumstances will succeed in robbing you of your happiness. You will no longer experience lack of happiness even when faced with adverse circumstances like dishonour, infamy, poverty and friendlessness, etc.

Remember that because you consider yourself miserable, you are miserable. The reason, for considering yourself miserable lies in your sense of want; this sense of want appears unwelcome, and what is unwelcome causes misery. Worldly circumstances will never be such that they will appear constantly and wholly favourable to the mind. In all circumstances, God Himself, the embodiment of good, is present; all circumstances are shaped according to the dispensation of God. Really speaking, every situation represents an Act of the Divine Play. Believing in this, if instead of looking at the external form of the circumstances, you peer behind the screen, and see God hidden there, and look at the circumstances, as nothing but God's dispensation, an Act of the Divine Play and thereby obtain the sweet contact of God, all external circumstances will become favourable to you, for in all circumstances you will feel the existence of God and this experience will drive away all your sense of want. And when the sense of want will cease to exist, misery also will automatically cease. In fact, not only will misery cease — the experience of the nearness of God being supremely agreeable and pleasant, and being itself the highest bliss, it will be the cause of supreme joy to you. You will then find yourself possessed of such transcendent joy that even the memory of worldly deficiency will fade out of your mind.

Remember that worldly need or the lack of it, agreeableness or disagreeableness whatever you experience, all these circumstances are but different disguises which the Lord Himself assumes for your good. When you just recognize Him, whatever the disguise He assumes, whether it is charming or terrible, you will neither get frightened nor feel miserable. The drama will appear to you as a fascinating entertainment, the sight of which will enamour and charm you every moment. Thus the very source from which springs your misery will dry up for ever. And you will then become yourself the very store and repository of Bliss.

Remember that those who seek worldly circumstances to be agreeable for attainment of bliss, or seek to gain bliss through the satisfaction of worldly needs, never find bliss which is stable and eternal, for their wants never come to an end. Nowhere and in no object there is perfectness in this world. Whatever he will get, he will find it imperfect and deficient, and this experience of deficiency will make the thing disagreeable. Hence he will never be happy.

Remember that if you seek true happiness and supreme Bliss, you have to obliterate the sense of worldly deficiency, the sense of worldly adversity. God is eternal and true; He is constantly present everywhere. Turn your gaze towards Him. There is no place where He is not, where He is absent. When you begin to see Him everywhere, worldly deficiency and the sense of disagreeableness will automatically cease — for the error of the sense of such deficiency or disagreeableness is taking place in the very Existence-aspect of God. Where you observe deficiency now, there is really no deficiency, for God Himself is present there. If you gain a vision of Him, who is All-pervasive and present in every form, you will then easily obtain that true and everlasting Bliss, which has been the object of your incessant and persistent search throughout your existence.

****

Hold Fast To Your Sadhana.

Remember : spiritual endeavour is threefold in character; it is of the nature of 'Abhyāsa' (practice), 'Ruchi' (something relishing) and 'Rati' (that which is enjoyable or delighting). A course of discipline followed with pertinancity in the hope of spiritual gain even though there is no enthusiasm, alacrity, earnestness or devotion in the heart, and even though the mind feels tired and distracted, nay, even inclined at times to give up the practice, is the preliminary or initial stage of Abhyāsa. When, however, the Abhyāsa grows through repetition, there is no longer a feeling of ennui or distraction and the practice runs a smooth course; yet one feels no delight in it. That is the intermediate stage of Abhyāsa. Then the same Abhyāsa becomes firmly rooted and begins to afford delight, when the mind conceives some attraction for it and feels a sort of compunction in abandoning it, that is called mature Abhyāsa. It is this mature Abhyāsa which gives rise to 'Ruchi' or relish in the course of discipline one follows.

Remember : once we develop 'Ruchi' or zest for our 'Sādhanā' we begin to relish it; it excites an agreeable feeling in our heart; nay, we inwardly wish the endeavour to continue uninterrupted and prove a perennial fountain of joy to us. Just as when there is appetite we relish the food that is served to us and feel inclined to pursue our Sādhanā once we develop a zest for it. But just as when our belly is full the appetite is quenched for some time, even so in the field of Sādhanā the mind appears sated as it were at times in spite of our relishing the Sādhanā, the result being that the progress of our spiritual endeavour is arrested as it were. But if we go on pursuing the Sādhanā of our liking, we ultimately develop a fondness for it. It is this fondness which takes the form of 'Rati' (Love).

Remember: once we develop 'Rati' (Love) for our Sādhanā, its interruption at any stage becomes altogether out of the question. Just as the stream of the holy Ganga unceasingly flows every moment towards the ocean, the course of Sādhanā proceeds uninterrupted henceforward. The speciality of this phase of Sādhanā lies in the fact that, in the course of this stage, characterized by 'Rati', one experiences ever new joy. At no time and in no circumstances does the mind feel sated; on the other hand, the more our Sādhanā advances, a newer longing for Sādhanā is awakened in our heart. Not a moment passes when there is a hiatus in the course of our spiritual endeavour. Since we experience a newer delight every moment our enthusiasm and alacrity are ever on the increase. In the long run the mind is completely and exclusively possessed by the object of our seeking, or to use another phraseology, every part of our mind gets wholly dedicated to the object of our seeking and becomes His property. The goal is then reached.

Remember : in the terminology of Yoga, 'Abhyāsa' corresponds to the "distracted" (Vikṣipta) state of the mind; 'Ruchi' represents a "concentrated" (Ekāgra) mind; while 'Rati' is equivalent to a thoroughly controlled or collected (Niruddha) mind. Or Abhyāsa represents the stage of Dhāraṇā (concentration); 'Ruchi' corresponds to the stage of Dhyāna (meditation) and 'Rati' is equivalent to 'Samādhi' (deep meditation or absorption). To use the terminology of later Vedānta, 'Abhyāsa' represents the first 'Bhūmikā' or stage of 'Jṇāna' (spiritual enlightenment); 'Ruchi' corresponds to the second 'Bhūmikā; while 'Rati' is equivalent to the third 'Bhūmimā', the culmination of which is marked by the Realization of Truth. Again, in the terminology of Devotion, 'Abhyasa, is synonymous with Vaidhī-Bhākti' (Devotion that follows certain rules). 'Ruchi' is only another name for 'Sādhana-Bhākti' (Devotion as a course of spiritual discipline); while 'Rati' is the same as 'Prema-Bhākti' (Devotion which is characterized by Love), which unites one with the Lord as one's beloved.

Remember : a striver should reverently and patiently tread that path alone on which he has pinned his faith, which may appear convenient to him, which may have been chalked out for him by his spiritual guide. As his 'Abhyāsa' matures through repetition he will automatically in due course reach the stages of 'Ruchi' and 'Rati' and then he will feel supremely delighted to find himself within reach of his goal. The striver, on the other hand, who changes his path every now and then will find it difficult even to mature his 'Abhyāsa', 'Ruchi' and 'Rati' being out of the question.

* * *

Break The Boundaries Of Your Self.

Remember : all living beings in this world are but your own self. None of them is alien to you, none is other than you. Just as the diverse organs of your body are but the limbs of your own body, the body is composed of them all, even so you comprise all.

Remember : you regard the living beings of this world as other than you and not your own self; that is why you remain indifferent to their joys and sorrows. Had you regarded them as your own, you would never have done so. When an organ of your body is hurt, do you feel that someone else is hurt ? Do you not feel any pain in it ? You do feel it. Why ? Because you feel one with all these organs.

Remember : if by ignoring the interests of all, by inflicting pain on others, you seek your own good— crave happiness for your own self, it will never do you good, nor will you be happy. Can anyone ever be cutting one's limbs with one's own hands ?

Remember : the differences of society, community, sect etc. have only one object to serve, *viz,* that the social organization may function well, and that every individual, following his own destined path, may reach the supreme goal of life—God. These differences are necessary and justifiable too; but this never means that they create any difference in the Self, and that anyone can be happy by marring the interests of another.

Remember : his life alone is a truly human life, and a blessed life, too, who, identifying himself with the Universal Soul, sees all living beings of the entire universe as his own self and, regarding the joys and sorrows of all as his joys and sorrows, naturally tries to relieve the suffering and cater for the happiness of all even as he does in his own case.

Remember : the more one's interests are self-centred the more abominable and injurious they are, just as water accumulated in a small pit gets putrefied, and becomes a breeding-place for worms. If your interest gets identified with the interest of the whole world, the interest of all living beings of the universe becomes your own interest, and such interest of yours will be both pure and salutary. God, the Soul of the Universe, will naturally continue to be worshipped through it.

Remember : he who feels that the whole of this world—all living beings inhabiting this universe—have emanated from his God, and that God alone ever pervades them all, can easily fulfil his life by worshipping God through every action of his. For him, every living being turns into an image of God, and every act of his becomes an act of worship to that God. And he who is ever engaged in worshipping God is sure to attain supreme perfection—to realize God in this very life.

Remember : transcending your narrow limits, and taking care not to regard the differences of nationality, caste, social grade, wealth and clime etc., as creating any difference in the Self, if you devote your life to the worship of God in the form of the universe, you will begin to see God at every step, and every moment; and your life will become supremely sacred—an ideal life for everyone to follow.

****

Eradicate Ego.

Remember: of all impurities of the mind, the blackest, the most sticking is the sense of 'I', or the Ego. It is not easily eradicated. Continuous hard labour is necessary to get over it. So long as this sense persists, spiritual effort cannot attain fruition. Even the slightest assertion of this sense frustrates all the progress made. The Ego is destroyed through renunciation of the idea of personal glory, or personal greatness. What does man really possess on which he can pride himself? If there is any trace of greatness anywhere it belongs to God. He who out of ignorance usurps that greatness and tries to arrogate it to himself becomes a victim of Ego. And wherever the germ of Ego springs up, all virtue comes to an end.

Remember: apart from God, there is none whose support can remove all your difficulties, root and branch. This is true even to the extent that if a man engaged in spiritual practice believes that he will overcome his difficulties with the strength of discipline followed by him, he commits a mistake. God alone is the dispeller of difficulties. With faith in His motiveless, infinite Grace, and taking shelter under His Grace, one should engage oneself in spiritual practice.

Remember : God is full of blessings and auspiciousness, whatever dispensation He has made for you is full of good for you. If you do not welcome that dispensation with pleasure, know it for certain that you are an extremely unfortunate soul. You are a man of small understanding. Where do you possess the intellect with which you can truly judge what is good and what is evil for you ? That is why God, who is an ocean of compassion as well as omniscient, has taken upon Himself the entire responsibility for you. Your only function now is to surrender yourself at His blessed feet, and shedding all fear and anxiety to welcome with delight every situation ordained by Him.

Remember : he whose heart is narrow, who burns at the sight of another's prosperity, fame, possessions, peace and growth, who derives pleasure from another's loss, can neither advance in the spiritual path, nor ever enjoy true happiness. Therefore, abandoning these petty and low thoughts, be broad-minded. Feel delighted knowing your own growth lying in another's growth, your own good in another's good, your own prosperity in another's prosperity, and ever seek with a sincere heart that all beings in the world may attain true prosperity, fame, possessions, growth, happiness and peace.

Remember : whenever any danger threatens you, God, the dispeller of dangers, stands behind you for your protection. The dense darkness you scan in front of you is nothing but your own shadow. Look to God. the embodiment of Supreme Light, who stands ever ready with outstretched arms to lock you up in His bosom and make you eternally happy.

Remember : all beings merged in Prakṛiti, the very form of modifications and change, are subject to error. Some form of evil exists in all, whether more or less. However great may be the extent of your goodness, you are not wholly faultless. Therefore, do not attempt to detect another's fault. If inadvertently you detect it, do not speak ill of him. Try to discover whether the same defect lies in you. Repent for it if it is there and try to get rid of it. Know it for certain that the world will appear to you of the same colour as the colour of the glasses you put on. If you yourself become free of fault, you will not detect evil anywhere. One who is established in Brahma sees Brahma everywhere.

****

Happiness Through Renunciation

Remember : there is absolutely no happiness in the enjoyments of the world. If a thing is absent in a place, how can it be discovered there ? Search for it, go from door to door, strike your head against the wall,—ever and everywhere,—in the end, you will be disillusioned by the blows of despair, despondency and suffering. Happiness—true and permanent—lies only in God, and that very God is realized through renunciation.

Remember : he who has realized the pure joy derived from renunciation never cares even to look at worldly enjoyments. The temptations of enjoyment no doubt appear before him, assuming various charming forms, in order to attract him towards them; but he rejects them all, like a person in possession of a jewel, throwing away worthless pieces of glass and pebbles of various beautiful colours.

Remember : when compared to the happiness which a man of renunciation enjoys through his contentment and spirit of renunciation, the joy derived from wealth, honour, fame, luxury and power is altogether trivial and insignificant. To tell you the truth, the joy derived from sensuous enjoyment is no joy at all. Men who possess no intelligence falsely imagine it to be so. In reality, it breeds nothing but misery; that is why men possessed of wisdom and intelligence do not allow their mind to be entangled by it.

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दु :खयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्त : कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुध : ।।
(Gita V. 22)

Remember : a thing which is subject to destruction and change and is imperfect by nature can never bring true and lasting happiness. That is why a person regarding himself happy today through possession of an object of enjoyment—wealth, honour, progeny or power— is found to be lamenting and weeping the very next day.

Remember : the path of renunciation appears at first to be somewhat difficult, somewhat rugged and rough; that is why the mind seeks to run away from it. But on thoughtful consideration, it will be realized that the difficulty, suffering, hardship and trouble that are undergone for gaining the objects of enjoyment and for their protection once they are gained, are never experienced while practising renunciation. On the contrary, there is a vast difference in kind between the difficulties of renunciation and the difficulties of enjoyment. The difficulties of renunciation are Sattvic by nature, and the difficulties of enjoyment are Rajasic and Tamasic in character. The difficulties of renunciation, in their ultimate result, lead to the attainment of immortality, and the difficulties of enjoyment lead only to poisonous burning, which makes life in this world and the next wholly intolerable.

Remember : enjoyment leads to wandering, while renunciation leads to stability in the Self. Enjoyment gives birth to strong craving, desires and passions, which bring only suffering and misery; while renunciation makes such impulses weak, and devoid of support; they disappear of their own accord, even as fire gets extinguished in the absence of fuel.

Remember : peace is attained in life only through renunciation—"त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम्" [Gita xii. 12] and through peace man realizes God, the embodiment of Supreme Bliss. Enjoyment brings unrest, which forcibly drags the Jīva to the tormenting fires of hell.

Remember : if renouncing the wrong conception, *viz,* 'happiness lies in enjoyment', you give up the attachment to enjoyment, you will quickly attain happiness, and this happiness of yours, based on renunciation, will lead you towards God. And thus you will certainly succeed in realizing God.

****

Contentment Is Peace.

Remember : just as the bright half of a lunar month treads on the heels of the dark half, the day appears at the close of night and sunshine follows the dark spell of a dust-storm, even so happiness will succeed sorrow and suffering. The night of despair will soon usher in its wake the happy bright dawn of hope. Hence one should not lose one's nerve in any circumstances whatsoever.

Remember : misery, in fact, proceeds from your desire and attachment; otherwise, there is no such thing as misery. Likewise, happiness born of worldly objects is nothing but infatuation. We fall into the vortex of suffering again and again because we expect happiness only from the worldly possessions; for happiness, really speaking, does not inhere in them.

Remember : happiness can never be attained through the satisfaction of your desires; for newer and newer desires continue to spring up in your heart. Supreme happiness is found in contentment alone.

Remember : he whose wants are never satisfied is never rid of his poverty, to whatever position he may outwardly attain. And so long as poverty is there he will ever feel miserable and wretched.

Remember: the thirst for novel and extensive sense-enjoyments and the lust for acquiring and hoarding objects of sense-enjoyment alone is poverty. This penury has been courted by man through ignorance; he can attain happiness by driving this penury away with the help of contentment and shutting it out once for all.

Remember: there is no end of sense-enjoyments because the extent of Prakṛti is limitless. In the same way desire knows no end; for just as fire blazes forth when clarified butter is poured on the burning fuel, even so desire grows implacable as one acquires sense-objects.

Remember: he who is contented with his own lot never burns with jealousy at the sight of other's exaltation, nor does he even aspire to be like them. He is, therefore, always happy.

Remember: he who takes pride in a life of pomp and show and of prodigality, and views such a life as essential and conducive to happiness is really ignorant and can never enjoy real happiness.

Remember: he who looks upon the life of men imbued with the spirit of non-possessiveness and self-denial as his ideal and accordingly cuts down his wants and requirements to make his living most simple, plain and frugal becomes happy. On the other hand, that erring soul who regards the life of the voluptuous and those who are given to hoarding and multiplies his wants and requirements to an inordinate degree in order to lead a garish and prodigal life repeatedly falls a prey to newer and newer sufferings.

Remember: real contentment manifests itself only when one develops unflinching faith in God and His benignant dispensation. A man, who resigns himself to the gracious will of the Lord, and conducting himself in accordance with His injunctions as far as possible, remains cheerful in all circumstances, ever finds himself under the benign protection of the Lord's lotus hands. By the Lord's grace not a tinge of sorrow dares enter his mind.

Remember: he who depends on the benign grace of the Lord, ever experiences supreme bliss through His grace. Really speaking, there is no happiness in any worldly object or situation,—it is nothing but a phantom of happiness, the other aspect of the opposite object and situation that are about to present themselves. Nay, it can even be termed as a prelude to sorrow.

Remember: with total dependence on the divine grace all adverse circumstances take a favourable turn once for all. Consequently sorrows too cease for good. Then everything appears agreeable and conduces to your happiness, whatever its outward form may be.

"Poison is converted into ambrosia, an enemy behaves as a friend; the ocean shrinks to the size of the footprint of a cow and fire becomes cool to the touch."

****

Cut Worldly Ties And Be Wise.

Remember : alone you have come and alone you will return. Nothing from this world nor any of your near and dear ones would accompany you when you leave this world.

Remember : you are badly needed in your home today. You too believe that the whole show is being run by you alone, that your presence is indispensable. But as soon as you die some arrangement or the other will be made to fill the gap and later on you will not be missed even.

Remember : as you have forgotten your parents, grandparents and others, and are quite content with your lot today, similarly your descendants too will forget you.

Remember : you are in vain entangled in the snare of attachment and the sense of possession. Forgetting the true goal of human life you are dragging it to the depth of degradation by giving your heart to that with which you will cease to have any connection one day and which will be consigned to oblivion for ever.

Remember : you did exist somewhere before this life, and must have also had parents, a hearth and home, wife, children and so on. But today you do not remember them. You never care even to find out how and where they are. Similarly after departing from here you will forget everything of this world in your next birth.

Remember : even though the **worldly** ties are transitory and imaginary, yet so long as you are attached to them your conscious and subconscious desires will not be obliterated. So long as these desires persist evil deeds will continue to be perpetrated by you : and so long as they continue to be perpetrated by you, happiness will never reveal its face to you.

Remember : as long as you wait for a particular sort of circumstances to practise devotion to God you will never be able to do so. Your idea of the circumstances will go on changing indefinitely. Therefore, start the practice of devotion in whatever circumstances you happen to be. Once the ball of devotion is set rolling the circumstances will turn favourable to you.

Remember : when the mind develops a charm for devotion all worldly ties get automatically loose. When you get attached to God and begin to consider Him as your own, the shackles of home and hearth, wealth and possessions, honour and fame would themselves be snapped asunder of their own accord. No separate endeavour therefore will be needed.

Remember: if you try to run away from and renounce the world, you will get bound all the more. Instead of struggling to free yourself from its grip, try to devote yourself with all your being to God. The moment you get a mere glimpse of the Lord's enchanting beauty the illusive charm of worldly objects and enjoyments will vanish. Thereafter you will have no inclination even to look at them.

Remember ; the span of life of a human being is as long as that of a python especially in these days when even boys and young men die suddenly. Therefore, devote yourself to the adoration of God at once without waiting for old age to come. If this opportunity is lost, repentance will be the only course left to you.

Remember : God has graciously provided you with all the means of crossing the ocean of mundane existence or attaining the love of God. If despite these means you are careless and do not turn them to good account you will prove to be the greatest fool.

****

Mend The Mind.

Remember : an idle mind is the devil's workshop. So long as the mind will keep steedily engaged in some responsible work, it will find no opportunity to indulge in idle, unnecessary and unworthy thoughts. But whenever it is free from responsible work—whenever the discipline of work is withdrawn from it, it will begin to reflect to things, whose remembrance never even crossed it, when it was engaged in some fruitful activity.

Remember : the greatest difficulty in the way of a tiro beginning the practice of meditation is that wretched, ugly, vulgar and atrocious thoughts, which remained far from his mind at other times, now make their appearance, and this naturally makes him feel confused and agitated. The reason for this is that his mind is not used to dwell on the object he intends to meditate upon; and things on which it is used to dwell have been withdrawn from it, and this turns his mind idle. But its nature is not to remain idle; hence it begins to uncover old pictures, which are imprinted on its tablet in the form of impressions, which it could not uncover when it was engaged in some responsible work.

Remember: if, in these circumstances, the practicant in sheer perplexity does not give up the practice of meditation, and continues to pursue his practice with devotion, then after some time, on the practice becoming firm, his mind will find pleasure in the object of meditation, and will eventually assume the very form of the object of meditation.

Remember: a man possessed of an erring mind alone indulges in activities in which he should never engage himself. The very meaning of error is non-performance of a proper act and performance of what is improper. Therefore, keep the mind constantly engaged in auspicious thoughts. And make it definitely responsible for this, saying that it must do that work, and do it perfectly and well. The mind should be kept to much absorbed in work that the thought of it may continue till one falls asleep, and the moment one is awake the same thought should take possession of the mind. When this happens, the mind's assumption of the form of the object of meditation become quick and easy.

Remember: when taking up a new thing, the mind once feels confused, hesitates, gets tired and sometimes even violently opposes it; but do not get alarmed at this. A cow feels uncomfortable when brought to a new place and resists with all her strength to be tied to a post to which she is not used, even though the place may be superior to and more comfortable than her previous habitation; when the rope is even slightly loosened, or an opportunity is

Acc 2165.X

found by her, she runs back to her former place. Even so, the mind also feels disinclined to take up new ideas and thoughts. This is the reason why a mind used to worldly thoughts feels alarmed at, hesitates, shows reluctance and even refuses to devote itself to the remembrance of God. But if without losing hope you continue to engage it in the constant practice of remembrance, it will get used to God's remembrance giving up worldly thoughts, even as the cow after a few days, forgetting her old habitat, finds pleasure in staying in her new home.

Remember : the Jīva's habit of indulging in worldly thoughts is very, very old. In conquering this habit, and turning the mind to the remembrance of God, if one spends even half the lifetime of a man, the period should be regarded as exceptionally short. The mind is, indeed, most difficult to conquer, and restless; but when the two means of Practice (constant cultivation of the habit of remembering God to which the mind is unused) and Dispassion (withdrawing the mind from worldly thoughts, showing it the misery and evil involved in such thoughts)—are carefully employed, it will, indeed, get used to divine remembrance. Then, the fear and possibility of any form of error will cease.

* * *

Stick To Virtue.

For the service of God, continue to perform acts which are approved by Dharma. Do not care to see whether the immediate effect of such deeds is favourable or unfavourable. And know it for certain that the ultimate result of virtuous deeds done for the pleasure of God can never be evil.

It is quite possible that immediately after performing some generous acts for another's good, you may be hurt by another; in going to serve others you may be insulted and dishonoured; or in protecting another, you may have to face grave risk to your life. But know it definitely that none of these is the result of your present virtuous act. You obtain this as the fruit of some Prārabdha, and it is nothing but an accident that this takes place when you are engaged in performing the virtuous deed. The last incident may leave the impression on your mind that it is the fruit of your present benevolent act. But this is, indeed, a wrong impression.

Believe, also, firmly in your mind that God ever extends His helping hand to one who is engaged in the practice of virtue. It is possible that in order to strengthen your will and determination to walk in the path of virtue, He may send obstacles in your way. But you, on your part, should not feel frightened, realizing that those obstacles have been sent only to increase or intensify your zeal. If ever they appear so strong that you are compelled to yield, you may physically bow before them; but never surrender your mind to them. Let the flow of your mind run uninterruptedly towards deeds of virtue, and hold firmly to the faith that God is accepting your service.

You have no friend, relative or helper greater than God; none so near to you as God. When all the avenues of help get closed to him, and no friend or relative ever thinks of peeping in, it is at that moment that a devotee, possessed of faith, directly realizes the truth that God is his supreme friend, that God is his sole helper. God's grace easily reaches him even there, and helps him even there, where no human agency can reach, and no earthly power can render him any aid.

Confused by adversity, do not dishonour God's supreme grace. Believe that in the form of your difficulties, it is God Himself, the remover of distress, who has appeared before you in order to remove what constitutes your real misfortune, and show you the way to protect yourself from misfortune in the real sense of the term. If you have faith, you will directly realize this truth.

Like a medicine tasting exceptionally bitter, or like a long drawn-out surgical operation, many difficulties appear at sight to be extremely terrible; but just as the medicine, or the operation, removes the disease, even so their after-effect is beneficial. Regarding the circumstances, better as medicine, as nothing but adversity or misfortune, man sometimes begins to express his displeasure to God. But this is nothing but an error on his part. He should understand that the chastisement of the mother also is inspired by the deepest love.

An earthly mother may inadvertently commit an error, or may repent after committing a wrong to her child under the impulse of either anger or sorrow. But God, the Supreme Lover, who is the very embodiment of Knowledge, can neither commit such an error, nor is it possible for Him to do any wrong under the impulse of any form of obsession.

Believe that whatever God ordians is full of good. Evil is impossible to take place under the dispensation of God, who is blessedness itself.

****

Rectify Your Own Faults.

There is no one in the world who is flawless or unerring. Therefore, do not chafe at others' errors nor wish harm to them.

Look into your own mistakes and strive unceasingly to rectify them. If you would observe others, do so from their own angle of vision, and placing yourself in their position.

They will no longer be found at fault so much.

Never take it into your head that you live only to reform others. First mend your own self. If you are able to mend yourself, a part of the world will have been automatically reformed. Should everybody thus undertake to mend one's own self the whole world will be automatically reformed.

Learn not to exhort others; learn only to follow your own counsel and mould yourself accordingly. Those who admonish others but do not take counsel,—do not abide by it, deceive their own selves and the world as well.

× × ×

Real acquisition is the accumulation of the highest virtues. Every living being in the world is endowed with some good quality or the other. See virtue, virtue shall you gain. See vice, vice shall be your reward. He who sees evil and evil alone in the creatures of the world becomes an ocean of vices.

He alone is truly handsome, whose life is handsome, noble. He, however, whose words alone are handsome, but whose life is impure, is a bundle of infamy. His attractive words are just like a layer of milk on the surface of a pitcher full of pioson, or like a glittering vase full of filth.

Examine your own self at every moment; try to banish the least trace of evil that may appear in your mind. You should get no leisure from reforming yourself.

When you get truly reformed, your life will instruct the world without your opening the lips. Nay, even if you live in seclusion in that state, the fragrance of the virtues residing in you shall bless and render the world happy.

Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Observe the virtues of all and shaking off pride go on humbly imbibing them.

As one who is greedy of wealth remains silently engaged in accumulating riches and delivers no lectures on the subject, even so keep yourself silently engaged in acquiring the wealth of divine virtues. Neither proclaim it, nor waste your life in empty talk.

× × ×

Give up the notion that without browbeating and threats, snubbing and rebuffing, bluffing and hoaxing, your friends and companions, wife and children, or servants and menials will get spoiled. The truth is quite the other way. By browbeating and threats and by bluffing and hoaxing, you estrange and alienate them for ever.

By handling a man with love, sympathy, respect, polite words, active goodwill, self-denial and unequivocal truthfulness alone can you win him over. If you behave in this way, people will be ready to make the greatest sacrifice for you. Your popularity will not be merely verbal. A very soft and delicate corner will be reserved for you in the people's hearts. You will be happy yourself, and so shall those who come in contact with you attain peace and happiness.

× × ×

Mind you, whatever you sow, the same shall you reap a thousandfold. If you seek happiness, bestow happiness on others; if you seek love, bestow love; if you seek your own honour, honour all; if you aspire for good qualities, inculcate good qualities in others; and leading a peaceful life in the world if you want to attain eternal peace in the end continue to perform such acts as may enable the creatures of the world to live in amity, and easily attain peace.

****

Discard Sense-Enjoyments.

Remember: so long as the idea persists in your mind that pleasure abides in the objects of sense-enjoyment you can never reach the precincts of true happiness. In the Gītā the Lord has termed such enjoyment as the soil productive of sorrow.

Remember: so long as you imagine there is pleasurableness in the objects of sense-enjoyment you cannot renounce them either. Even if you outwardly give up a particular object of enjoyment for some reason, the feeling will persist in your mind that there was pleasurableness in the object you have given up. Thus your notion with regard to its pleasurableness will remain unchanged. This will mean that mentally you have not renounced it.

Remember: even those who have forsaken their wealth, family, home, bodily comforts and other luxuries and live in seclusion feel in their mind that they have done something very great in renouncing such excellent and important things worth possessing. In short, they continue to regard those objects as valuable and so long as they do so mental renunciation of such objects is out of the question.

Nay, when a favourable opportunity presents itself to them, such objects return in their concrete form to the men who had renounced them and they accept them under quite different names even though continuing in the garb of a recluse.

Remember: until you come to look down upon a thing as worth discarding, abominable, baneful or filthy its total renunciation is not possible. But when a thing is renounced after you have begun to look down upon it as trash, you no more regard it as worth anything, nor do you feel exalted by its renunciation. Is there anyone who ever says to himself that he has given up the most valuable and excellent objects worth retaining or prides himself on such renunciation after he has evacuated his bowels in the woods, expelled his vomit by flushing the drain, cleared his nose of its mucus by blowing it, swept his house and thrown out the refuse thus collected, removed the filth scattered here and there and got the same cast on the dunghill or has had a dead and stinking rat or other creature flung afar? The Śāstras ask us to renounce the pleasures of sense like poison or vomit only because the renunciation which comes after we have recognized their impure character becomes stable and after that we shall no longer remember them.

Remember: as long as your mind recognizes the objects of sense-enjoyment as of some worth their real renunciation is quite out of the question. They haunt the memory and they also continue to be accepted in one form or the other and during their acceptance they do not arouse the least aversion or hostile feeling. Nay, in order to cloak the impropriety or establish the propriety of one's conduct in this behalf such conduct is labelled as even-mindedness, which is a dangerous form of self-deception and nothing else.

Remember : The scriptures have compared prestige to the dung of swine, while honour and kind attention have been declared by the saints as sweet poison. Nay,—wealth and other such things have been spoken of as repelling like excreta and woman as burning coal. But just ponder and look within whether you feel like that on obtaining these or do you feel a bit gratified—experience a thrill of joy. If so, is your renunciation genuine ?

Remember : even though no joy is felt on obtaining the pleasures of sense, your renunciation is not true if you harbour in your mind the idea that you have given up sense-enjoyment—valuable objects affording delight to the senses.

Remember : you should see God every where—everything other than God should cease to exist—and if things other than God continue to exist, they should exist only as impure, painful and evil objects worth renouncing. Your mind should recoil from them in the same way as a strictly vegetarian Vaiṣṇava recoils from meat, a man having knowledge of death shuns poisons like arsenic etc., a pious and devoted wife shuns every other man and a truly non-violent person is averse to taking another's life.

Remember: the world is overfull with the eternal Oversoul, the very embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss. It is from that All-blissful entity that all these beings have sprung up; in Him do they live; and it is into Him that they eventually enter. Not only living beings but even inanimate objects are all manifestations of God. But until such a realization comes it is most essential that enjoyments which tend to distract the mind from God should be looked upon as synonymous with pain, worthless and fit to be discarded. They cannot be renounced without cultivating such an attitude towards them.

****

Cultivate Good Thoughts.

Remember : a man's thoughts actually represent his character. Outwardly a person may discourse on the highest knowledge, the best form of devotion or the purest type of dispassion; but so long as his internal thoughts do not actually correspond with those ideas, he really possesses neither knowledge, nor devotion, nor even dispassion.

Remember : change of thoughts does not take place in a trice through mere nominal effort. Constant practice in a reverential spirit, for a long period of time, is essential for the purpose. Cultivate the good thoughts, which stand in contradiction to the evil thoughts arising within your mind, and reflect on them again and again. For the removal of attachment to worldly objects, practise dispassion, seeing the misery and evil abiding in such objects. For removal of the attraction for male or female form and lust, reflect on the obnoxious things within the human body—blood, flesh, fat, marrow, bone, faeces, urine, phlegm, etc. and place before the mind's eye the picture of a stinking corpse. For removal of the habit of reflection on another's faults search earnestly for the good points in others, and turn the searchlight of your attention to your own defects. Conquer anger by forgiveness, greed by reflection on the terrible misery suffered by men of greed. For the removal of grief and sorrow, cultivate faith in the auspicious dispensation of God; and for the destruction of sinful desires, remember the tortures of hell.

Remember: the mind suffers from five defects—dejection, hard-heartedness, day-dreaming, waywardness and ugly thoughts. Remove these defects by the cultivation of pure thoughts which stand in contradiction to them. Delightfulness, mildness, mental silence, mind-control and practice of pure thoughts—these are the states contradictory to those defects. When one develops the faith that whatever is obtained by him in this world as fruit through the auspicious dispensation of God is really speaking auspicious in quality, though outwardly it may appear as frightful—one feels delighted under all circumstances of life. When one treats you harshly, it pains your heart; and a kindly treatment brings you pleasrue. Similarly, the hardness on your part is painful to others, and your kindness is the source of joy to others—reflection on these thoughts will make your nature mild and soft. The mind will never attain peace, so long as it continues to reflect, day and night, on the favourable and unfavourable objects of this world; therefore instead of this, one should take to the constant practice of remembrance of the Lord's name, virtues, sports, truth and secret, etc., which will make the mind silent so far as these objects are concerned. So long as the mind is not subject to control, it will continue to wander wherever it pleases and caught in the whirligig of impure thoughts it will go on creating newer and newer sources of misery and suffering. The mind is, really speaking, your (the soul's) servant, and not its lord. Understanding this properly and well, when you bring the mind under your control, it will act as a disciplined servant, a helper to you in all your noble and virtuous efforts. Devote the mind to the study of the character, merits and advantages of continence, forbearance, contentment, dispassion, humility, non-violence, truth, non-stealing, modesty, etc. instead of remaining merged in evils like lust, anger, arrogance, infatuation, violence, untruth, theft, vanity, etc, which now fill your mind and guide your actions and on account of which your life appears as the very embodiment of evil. Your mind will, then, be filled with those pure and propitious thoughts. Thus when those five things will take possession of your mind, you will attain perfection in mental austerity. And your external conduct will be similarly pure.

Remember: for attaining control over thoughts, the most useful and suitable practice is to cultivate firm faith in the power of the Soul, or in the grace of almighty God, our best friend. The more this faith is developed, the more quickly and easily will a person be able to destroy the evil thoughts lodged within his mind and expand his auspicious thoughts. Identification with the body, haughtiness, dependence on material power and similar impure and degrading sentiments get uprooted from the mind of one, who has faith in the Soul, or in God.

* * *

Plant Flowers Not Thorns.

Remember: there is no person, who does not possess some virtue, and no person, who is entirely free from evil. Good points and evil points are present equally in all. In some individuals, the evil points are more manifest, and in others, the good ones. These good and evil points come to the surface due to various causes. Placing certain auspicious and good ideas before an individual, we can draw out the same kind of virtues hidden within him, and through the suggestion of inauspicious and evil ideas, we can similarly draw out the same kind of evil lying within him. When the virtues come to the surface, man begins to act according to them, as a result of which those who come in contact with him derive some benefit, more or less, and obtain happiness. And when the evils are brought to the surface, they similarly begin to inspire action, bringing both injury and misery to man. Therefore, take care that you do not do anything whose reaction will draw out the evil hidden in another person and make him truly a personification of evil. By your virtuous conduct wake up the dormant virtues in others. Do not wake up the demerits and evils in them by your own evil conduct.

Remember: by your vilification, backbiting and abuse, or by the use of words, which pierce the heart, or by your injurious and hostile conduct, or by any unfair action under the impulse of anger, pride or greed,—if you wake up the dormant evils in another, and produce an aggravation of them, you will do a great injury to the world. And this, in its turn, is sure to bring injury to yourself also. Contrary to this, if by your words of sincere praise and sweet encouragement, your friendly conduct full of good intentions, your brotherliness, fellow-feeling and love, you wake up the sleeping virtues in others, you will contribute to the good of the world, as a result of which you are also sure to obtain good.

Remember: as are the seeds, so the fruit. If you sow the seeds of good, their fruits will be good and which getting infinite in number will spread far and near. Therefore, if a man is a personification of evil, and whose conduct towards you also is inspired by evil, return to him good for evil. The flow of good from you should proceed as in a flood carrying off all the roots of evil within him. Thereafter, scatter the seeds of good there—in abundant measure, so that they may produce good and good alone, in a positive and definite manner.

Remember: if people give up the habit of returning evil for evil, the very tradition of evil will soon get lost, and good and nothing but good will fill up every being in all quarters. For evil produces evil, and, goo produces good. Therefore, do good, to your heart's content, even to those who injure you, sift out the virtues of your backbiter and praise him, bless the reviler, pray to God for the good of those who assault you, and keep your heart full to the brim with noble sentiments—so that the very thought of returning evil for evil may not cross their mind.

Remember: those who condemn you, whatever may be the motive by which they may be guided, really do you good; and the majority of the causes, which prompt the condemnation, are founded on fact. And the praises, which are showered on your ears, are mostly based on falsehood. This you will clearly perceive if you probe them deeply. Therefore, do not get misguided by praises, do not feel puffed up; and let not censure make you miserable. On the contrary, devote your thought to the cause which prompts the abuse, sift the truth behind it and rectify the defect, feel grateful to the reviler and critic, and try to render disinterested service to him, with the purest of motive.

* * *

Ever Keep Yourself Cautious About Sin.

The echo follows the sound and resembles the sound in every respect. Even so we receive from others what we actually give them. And this, like a fruit yielding innumerable seeds, we receive many times multiplied.

If you crave for happiness, make others happy; if you seek honour, offer honour to others; if you desire good, do good unto others; and if you want evil to befall you, do evil unto others. Remember, whatever the character of the seed you sow, you will get appropriate fruit in return. Whether it will be plentiful or less, will be determined by the character of the ground.

Men who are devoted to violence will get destroyed by violence; and those who are of a pious nature will be freed from all forms of sin in consequence of their piety. Violence devours the man of violence himself, and piety protects the pious from the blazing fire of sin.

The comparison between violence and virtue is as absurd as between poison and nectar. Just as a pious man by his natural conduct spreads throughout the world the spirit of love, compassion, forgiveness and oneness among all, even so the man of violence spreads enmity, cruelty, anger and unfriendliness.

Violence leads to the aggravation of misery in this world and spoils the prospect of happiness in the other world; but piety spreads happiness and peace throughout the world, and keeps the next world secure. The fruit of piety may be reaped after a long delay, but it ever tastes sweet like nectar.

Man should ever keep himself cautious about sin. Tolerance of sin, even in the slightest degree, means giving an opportunity to the powerful plant of sin to strike its root. When through such tolerance, man once gets entangled in sin, he begins to merge in it from day to day, and gradually derives happiness from it— so much so that finally he develops a sense of duty in the commission of sin. He is thus caught in a vicious circle from the bondage of which he cannot easily free himself and continues to be fascinated by the ever new forms assumed by it.

Due to ignorance, a man feels a sort of happiness, when he commits sin. At that time, the result of sin is not present before him. But he entertains in the mind an idea of the evil it will lead to, traditionally handed down from generation to generation, which after the commission of sin reproaches his conscience and frightens him; but through the continued commission of sin even that idea gets erased, resulting in the substitution of a sense of pride in sinful acts. Thereafter, man's intellect prompts him to regard sin as virtue and virtue as sin. This state of man is, indeed, extremely deplorable.

Hence one should constantly attempt to avoid the association of sinners and cultivate the association of virtuous souls. It is possible that due to the wrong judgement of his intellect he may find nothing but loss in the adoption of the course; but, nevertheless, it is indisputable that the association with sinners leads to misery, and the association with virtuous souls leads to happiness. This last type of association cultivated after proper appreciation of its glory is of such intrinsic merit that it may lead to the total annihilation of the roots of misery and easy realization of divine, perfect happiness or bliss.

****

Pain Is Gain : Pleasure Is Loss.

Surely you know—suffering is the result of sin, and happiness the reward of virtue. Therefore, when you meet with sorrow in the world, when your pleasures of sense are cut short, a part of the stock of your sins gets neutralized, you are relieved of a fearful Karmic debt. And when in this world you get pleasures of sense, your worldly troubles disappear, a part of your merit is neutralized, a part of your investment in the shape of meritorious good acts is exhausted. Thus it is proved that the attainment of sense-enjoyment constitutes a loss whereas a worldly calamity is a gain. Therefore, when you get a pleasure of sense, enjoy it reluctantly with the feeling that there being no help it has to be enjoyed though in reality it is injurious. On the other hand, when some worldly calamity comes to you, suffer it with eagerness and zeal, reckoning it to be a great benefit to you.

Remember : your weeping and wailing will not bring to an end the painful experience that has fallen to your lot, nor will your intense longing and solicitude bring you pleasures of sense. But if you will come to look upon sorrow as an agreeable experience and a gain and view pleasure as something unpleasant and a loss, which they really are, you will not be perturbed or distressed when you are faced with worldly sorrows and there will be no craving or desire for pleasures. You will remain unperturbed and cheerful when either comes of its own accord.

Remember : it is the craving or desire for sense-enjoyment which is the root of all sorrow. Impelled by this desire man resorts to evil practices of various kinds; and it is because of this he meets with frustration and depression again and again and neglecting his duty takes to the path of self-ruination. If a man gets acquainted with the harms wrought by sense-enjoyments and remembers them he can never feel attracted towards them.

Remember : Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has told Arjuna in the Gitā that "the pleasures born of sense-contacts are verily a source of suffering only (though appearing as enjoyable to those who are blinded by sensuality). They are evanescent. That is why no wise man would ever indulge in them".

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दु :खयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्त : कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुध : ।।
(V. 22)

Remember : he alone is truly wise, who has understood this secret and fixes his mind on God with a heart full of devotion, looking upon Him as the Creator of the world and the spring of all worldly activity.

Remember: he who has fixed his mind on God, who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss solidified attains Him; whereas he who remains engrossed in the thought of worldly pleasures gets such pleasures, which are fleeting and rooted in sorrow. He who realizes God is rid of all sorrows for good and enjoys supreme bliss and peace for all time to come. The acquisition of sense-enjoyments, on the other hand, adds ever new fuel to the fire of woes because of their deficiency, mutability and transitoriness and because of their enjoyment being dependent on others; and the flames of this fire continue to scorch us in a fearful manner through many subsequent births.

Remember: God has graciously bestowed upon us the human form in order to enable us to rid ourselves completely of our woes. If we waste this precious legacy in fostering attachment for the pleasures of sense, in enjoying those pleasures and in maintaining an attitude of hostility towards God, all of which land us into terrible woes of newer and newer types, there can be no greater folly on our part and no greater loss to us than this. Such a conduct on our part is tantamount to spurning the Divine Grace and abusing the rare opportunity of a human birth.

****

Welcome Divine Dispensation.

Remember : you commit a very great blunder in that you covet the transient objects and living beings of this world, accounting them pleasurable, and, forgetting God, indulge in evil practices and immoral acts of various kinds in order to gratify such desire and thereby incessantly revolve in the forest of metempsychosis, so full of suffering and agony. Far from attaining happiness, you will have newer and newer causes of woe in this forest and suffer newer and newer torments in newer and newer states of embodied existence. Hence put an end to the desire for worldly objects, both animate and inanimate.

Remember : it is exceedingly difficult for one who seeks luxuries to escape from sin. Even if you are able somehow to escape from sin, your bondage will not cease. A fetter is a fetter after all, be it of gold or iron. You will ever remain bound by the cords of mundane existence. of birth and death.

Remember : whatever happens to you here happens for your good alone according to the decree of the all-merciful and all-propitious Providence as a result of your past actions. Hence let the working of destiny take its own course; and, realizing it as imbued with divine grace, persuade yourself that whatever is befalling you under the benign dispensation of the Lord is not only serving to liquidate your Karmic debt but that it will positively conduce to your good, to your greatest advantage, inasmuch as the course of your destiny has been shaped by the gracious hands of the all-benignant Lord. Armed with this belief, rejoice over each dispensation of the Lord.

Remember: it is absolutely true that each benign dispensation of the Lord redounds to your supreme benefit. And it is the height of good fortune to remain ever happy, pinning one's faith on this truth; nay, being indicative of faith in God, such a state of mind is highly propitious too. Nevertheless, when considered from the point of view of God-love, this belief too is not exalted; for the ground of happiness here is the prospect of the highest advantage following from this attitude. It is the idea of supreme benefit and not God-love that dominates the belief that "the Lord, who is all beneficence can never be maleficent; and whatever He ordains—no matter whether it is exceedingly stern or extremely mild—will redound to our greatest benefit. (And since it is our benefit that we seek,) therefore it is most gratifying!" Hence this attitude is inferior to God-love.

Remember: where there is love there is no consciousness of gain or loss, the thought which is ever uppermost in the mind of a lover of God is the thought of gratifying his most beloved Lord, the sole object of his love. The gratification of the Lord lies in that which conforms to His will. Hence a lover of God is ever anxious to see that everything turns out according to His design. He has no notion of any gain other than this nor does he feel concerned over any loss. He does not therefore crave for happiness nor does he care for suffering. The supreme gain to his mind consists in the fact that his entire life conforms to the will of his most beloved Lord, the sole recipient of his love. He has no will, no life, of his own nor any work in life. Nor he has anything to seek or gain or renounce. The gratification of the Lord alone is his supreme gratification, supreme gain.

Remember : if you ever conceive any distinct gain of yours and seek to achieve it, nay, rejoice over the prospect of achieving it,—no matter if that is achieved under the dispensation of the Lord (and really speaking every gain is achieved under the dispensation of Providence)—desire lurks in you, which constitutes a stigma on love, and under such circumstances genuine love remains out of sight.

****

Bury Your Worries.

Remember : God exists; He is omnipresent, omniscient and the suzerain Lord of all spheres; He is absolutely free from doubt and error. And such a God is your disinterested friend, is unaccountably kind to you. It is only because you are ignorant of this fact and do not believe it that you are a victim of unrest and suffering.

Remember : He who is omnipresent has got the power to do everything. He can do anything and everything He likes. His potency never fails, none can obstruct the operation of His energy.

Remember : He who is omniscient knows everything relating to the past, the present and the future. He is fully aware of what is in your mind, what are your actual needs, wherein lies your true welfare and what is prejudicial to your interests.

Remember : He who is the paramount Lord of all the worlds is the Ruler of all. The entire realm of Nature is subject to His control. He is the Overlord even of the rulers of all the spheres. The creation and dissolution of countless worlds is carried on by His mere will.

Remember : He who is free from delusion and error can neither err nor go wrong in any circumstances. Every act of His is enlightened, faultless and free from error.

Remember : such a God is your natural well-wisher, and not because you are devoted to Him. You may practise Devotion or not, you may do service to Him or not. You are a living being after all and He is a true friend of all living beings. He loves you without any motive and is ever ready to do good to you.

Remember : this love, this goodwill of God is infinite, boundless, absolutely full of nectar (immortalizing), benignant in every way and is spontaneously and unaccountably raining upon us every moment. Failing to recognize this grace and turning away from it, they, however, who shut themselves up in the dark cell of wanton indulgence in forbidden delights of the senses are deprived of it and consequently ever remain restless and unhappy.

Remember : there is none else in the world, who though omnipresent and omniscient, nay, the suzerain Lord of all spheres and ever free from delusion and error, unaccountably pours His love on you and seeks to do good to you, never forgetting you, who are so unimportant and insignificant.

Remember : when you are reassured by a petty official, a man of some pecuniary worth, a person wielding some power or a man of sound judgment in this world, you feel secure and remain grateful to him.

Remember : everyone in this world has a limited power and that too is not everlasting. Besides all are liable to err. Again, no one here is your disinterested friend and well-wisher. The love and goodwill of people here has got some motive or other behind it. God, however, is altogether different from them. He Himself says that they who come to recognize Him as such attain lasting peace.

Remember : if in spite of such spontaneous grace of God, you remain deprived of it due to lack of faith, if you fail to achieve the object of your life by entirely and unconditionally throwing yourself at His mercy, if you do not realize the supreme ambition of your life by depending on Him, you are most unlucky.

Remember : such a rare privilege of human birth cannot be had repeatedly. Therefore, reposing faith in God and His goodwill, let your life be crowned with success. Neither you should go astray nor lose time. If this opportunity of a human life is thrown away, nothing but remorse will fall to your lot.

****

March On Your Own Path.

Remember : reality or God is only one, He alone is Brahma (the Absolute); He alone is Paramatmā (the Supreme Spirit). It is He who is formless, unspecified and attributeless as well as endowed with form, speciality and attributes. He has many names and many forms "Without name or form" is itself a name and a form. He is the one in all and is eternally perfect. He alone has the shape of the universe; He is the Support of the universe and He alone transcends it.

Remember : it is the one Supreme Reality, God, who, being worshipped by various seekers under different names and in different forms, is manifest in so many forms in order to reveal His Self to them. He alone is Lord Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Śankara, Goddess Durgā, the Sun-god, Lord Gaṇeśa and the diverse numberless forms of these five. Besides these, it is He who is adored by the followers of other religions too. Nay, He alone is the negation made by the agnostic.

Remember : although the ultimate goal to be attained by the strivers is ever undifferentiated, it does present differences when considered from the point of view of the various courses of discipline followed with the object of realizing Him. The nature of the goal and the mode of approach to it vary according to the predilection, mental attitude and eligibility of the seeker, which is as it sbould be. The endeavour to unify all the modes of approach to the Reality is a wild-goose chase or midsummer madness. He who advocates unification of all the courses of discipline—all the modes of approach to the Reality is as unwise as he who recommends that all travellers to Varanasi, for example, should follow the same route from the very beginning, no matter whether they commence their journey from Cape Comorin in the South, Mount Kailasa in the north, Sibsagar (Assam) in the east or Sind in the west.

Remember : a seeker of mild disposition can never worship the dreadful Kālī or Chhinnamastā, Lord Narasiṃha, Lord Śiva in His destructive aspect and so on, any more than a cruel-hearted man can take to the worship of Child Śrī Kṛśṇa of enchanting appearance and producing enthralling music on His flute, Goddess Saraswatī or Lord Śiva in His serene and gentle aspect. The form of worship varies according to the nature and inclination of the worshipper. God being one, the worshipper in any form and under any name of the omnipotent Supreme Spirit and the Supreme Infinite, the paramount Lord,—who is all-formed yet transcends all and who is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss solidified,—worships the same Reality.

Remember : he who takes to the worship of a deity or adopts a course of discipline which runs counter to his nature and inclination does not succeed. And they, who wean a striver following a particular course of discipline from his path and try to drag him to a path contrary to the one he is marching on, only do him harm. In this way he goes astray, is unable to tread the new path and, lapsing into inaction, ruins his life. Therefore, go on marching each on your own path and look upon those treading other paths as marching towards the abode of your own Lord by different routes. Neither hate nor abhor nor look down upon anybody, nor try to put anyone off his right track. Nor again should you leave your own path feeling enamoured of another.

Remember : in variety lies the beauty of the Lord's creation. Diversity can never cease. The ultimate and supreme success of human life consists in perceiving the eternal unity through all this diversity and in realizing one God, the soul and root of all differences, by following one's own course of discipline.

****

Be A True Devotee.

Remember: attachment to or the craving for the pleasures of sense cannot be eradicated by change of abode, dress or name or simply by outwardly changing one's mode of life. For this consummation, weaning of the mind from the objects of senses and freedom from craving is essential. A man who inwardly nurtures such craving for the pleasures of sense, though outwardly putting up a show of renunciation, not only deceives the world but badly deceives his own self too.

•

Remember: hankering after enjoyment under cover of renunciation is very dangerous. A man openly given to the pursuit of sensuous enjoyment is known to be such by all. He too is conscious of his weakness and never claims to be a man of renunciation. He, however, who deems himself to be a man of renunciation and asks the world too to recognize him as such, and yet cherishes fondness and a craving for the pleasures of sense, descends into a deep abyss of degradation. His hankering after sense-objects finds expression and seeks gratification through various perverted channels, with the result that, distorting and bringing into disrepute renunciation, dispassion, yoga, devotion, love, spiritual knowledge and enlightenment, he sets an exceedingly ignoble example before the world.

Remember : if you really think yourself to be a man of renunciation and glorify renunciation, but at the same time look with envy on the luxuries of others, on their comfortable cars, their attractive houses and mansions, their honour and prestige, their fame and glory, their worship and adoration, the number of their servants and disciples, their affluence and power; if all these excite your cupidity, if you regard such persons as fortunate and if you are seized with a longing to enjoy such luck, know it for certain that you are even worse than those sensual men who in their natural eagerness to acquire luxuries openly pursue the pleasures of sense. They have chosen for themselves the straight path of self-indulgence; while you have to make a cooked endeavour to acquire luxuries and enjoy them while maintaining your garb of renunciation—keeping up the show of self-denial. For this you have to fall back upon hypocrisy, chicanery and deceit, to pervert the scriptures by twisting their texts and putting upon them the construction sought by you, and to allow yourself to be bound with stout shackles of infatuation by founding various institutions in the name of altruism, public service, service of the Lord, propagation of piety, spiritual wisdom and Devotion and the good of the world, pitching their standard and raising slogans in that behalf. You profess to popularize good morals, ideal Devotion, good disposition, spiritual knowledge and holy books such as the Gītā and the Ramāyaṇa and the ways and means of ameliorating society and the world at large. Really speaking, however, you advertise yourself, celebrate the prestige and glory of your own name and personality, scatter abroad disrespect towards God by installing your own gross body and illusory name on the holy seat of God, and disseminate rank ignorance in the name of spiritual knowledge by writing and getting others to write a chronicle glorifying a false name and personality.

Remember: you bring about your own woeful degradation thereby. You will certainly not be able to deceive God. On the other hand, you alone will be deprived of the highest reward of human existence and will badly rue it if you seek to propagate luxury in the name of renunciation and if you proceed to launch an undertaking to get yourself honoured and adored in place of God; but then you will have no remedy left at your disposal. Therefore, desist from such endeavour at once and silently devote yourself to the practice of adoration—to the thought of and contemplation on the Lord's divine personality, virtues and essence and to the recital of His sweet names.

Remember: if you turn out to be a true devotee of the Lord or realize His essential character by gaining an insight into it, the world will be supremely benefitted by you as a matter of course, even though you do not claim to seek the good of the world and even though you do not exert for it. You will prove to be an automaton working for the highest good of the world. You will not only cross the ocean of mundane existence but enable others too to cross it.

****

Never Look At Other's Faults.

Remember : the world is a playground of the three Guṉas or modes of Prakṛti—*viz,* Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Wherever there is Sattva (the quality of goodness), Tamas (the principle of darkness or ignorance) also must be there. Where there is some ideal virtue, some weakness must also be present there. What you should do is to see that your weekness continue to get eliminated and your virtues go on accumulating. But never commit the error of looking at others' faults. If you do so, you will grow proud of your virtue and the result will be that even that virtue will prove to be instrumental in multiplying your faults.

Remember : if you look at others' faults, you will get habituated to it. You will develop a censorious eye and then you will discover faults and faults alone everywhere and at every time, even where they do not exist; for your eyes will be predisposed to discover faults.

Remember : the more you look at others' faults the more you dwell on the dark side of things. That which you repeatedly dwell upon ceases to repel you as something reprehensible and it gradually finds its way into your being and settles there. The idea is that the more you look at others' faults the more they will find their way into your being.

Remember : the faults that have existed in you for a long time will get rejuvenated, reinvigorated and nourished and will increase their strength by attracting newer and newer faults.

Remember : When you discover faults in all, you will no longer abhor those existing in you. Far from pricking you, their presence will begin to appear welcome to you. Later on you will begin to take pride in them.

Remember : when you discover faults in all, you will begin to feel convinced that the faults in question exist in all, and that they are not capable of being eliminated, so that any attempt to eradicate them is futile. In this way, when all attempt at their eradication begins to appear futile, you will no more feel inclined to drive them out. A peculiar kind of despondency and lassitude will set in. Acknowledging defeat in its struggle with the faults your mind will allow them a permanent abode.

Remember : when you develop the habit of looking of others' faults and discover faults and faults alone—whether actual or imaginary—in others, who is going to judge whether the fault you have discovered in anybody actually exists in the individual or not ? You will begin to expose others' faults without investigating their reality or otherwise. Man does not like to hear his own faults even if they are real and resents their being exposed. And if anyone levels baseless charges against him and gives them publicity, he often finds it impossible to tolerate such false imputation and begins to nurse a grudge against the scandal-monger. Nay, he often gives vent to his anger and sometimes goes the length of using violence against the calumniator. Hence people will enter into conflict with you, have quarrels with you and foster animosity and hatred against you with the result that your life will grow to be a hotbed of newer and newer troubles and unrest.

Remember : if you continue to look at others' faults and remain beset with troubles following in the wake of such censoriousness, not only will your spiritual practice cease but you will lose your peace of mind even in the worldly sense; and there is no other loss so serious as the discontinuance of one's spiritual practice. You will burn day and night and, remaining a slave of demoniac and devilish propensities, will continue in a state of constant dread. You will not find goodness anywhere in the world; you will detect flaws even in saints and holy men, nay, in the Lord Himself. The result will be that the standard of your life will be much lowered.

Remember : this constitutes an ignominious failure of human life—the greatest loss one can suffer. Therefore, make it a point not to look at the faults of others. Pry into your own faults and, instead of crying over them and giving way to despair, fight them like a hero and banish them from your heart.

Remember : your potency is infinite, You are the conscious Spirit endowed with unlimited energy. You are a ray of the Supreme Spirit. The mind as well as the senses are your servants; if you realize your essential character, which is purely spiritual, and exercise your sway over them, they will immediately submit to your control. All your faults and foibles which are inspired by these alone will take flight out of fear. You will spontaneously advance towards God and will eventually realize Him and thus achieve your end. You should not only refuse to look at others' faults but cease to think of their virtues too if possible; for by dwelling on others' virtues you develop attachment for them and by dwelling on their faults you conceive hatred for them. Attachment too is a source of bondage and leads to one's downfall. Therefore, diligently fix your mind exclusively on God and dwell on Him alone; and devote your mind to worldly objects, where necessary only with a view to pleasing God and rendering service to Him.

****

The Palatable Poison.

Remember: honour and praise are a palatable poison. They appear most agreeable when received; but they easily lead the striver astray. Love for honour and praise makes a man a victim of hypocrisy, deceit, envy, malice, animosity and a host of other evils hitherto unknown.

Remember: a seeker of honour and praise remains exclusively engaged in tickling the fancy of others; for honour and praise are invariably had from others. If people bestow honour and praise on those practising adoration, he begins to simulate adoration. If, on the other hand, honour and praise are expected from immorality or sin, he would have no scruple in practising immorality and sin. Hence ever be afraid of honour and praise.

Remember: there are four types of men in the world, *viz,* (1) enlightened souls, who are alike to honour and praise, on the one hand, and ingominy and censure, on the other; (2) advanced Sādhakas or striving souls, who feel miserable in the midst of honour and praise and rejoice in ignominy and censure, nay, who look upon those bestowing honour and praise as unfriendly and those subjecting them to ignominy and censure as their well-wishers;(3) the sensually-minded, who seek honour and praise and regard them as the highest gain in life and (4) the depraved, who remain engaged in vile pursuits regardless of honour and praise, nay, even putting up with ignominy and censure.

Remember : the enlightened not only view honour and ignominy, praise and censure, alike; the latter cease to have any existence in their eyes. Hence they love those subjecting them to ignominy and censure in the same way as those bestowing honour and praise; they succour the former, when in distress, as sincerely and to the same extent as the latter; they overlook the faults of the former even as they ignore the latters' faults; nay, they wish well of the former in the same way as they wish well of the latter.

Remember : advanced strivers rejoice in ignominy and censure; but this does not mean that they indulge in any sinful act in order to incur ignominy and censure. They never deliberately perpetrate a vile deed; but if anyone subjects them to ignominy or censure in spite of their engaging in noble pursuits, they regard him as their well-wisher. They believe that those insulting and censuring them are blessed with a most penetrating vision, which enables them to discern clearly even their hidden and minute faults, and further that they do them a good turn by vilifying or insulting them inasmuch as they are anxious to see them entirely free from blemish. Visualizing their goodness in this way, they hold them in estimation; while they look upon those bestowing honour and praise as their ignorant friends, who, though loving them, are unable because of their love to detect, much less mention their faults, and who on the other hand, aggravate their faults by bestowing praise and honour.

Remember : if anyone bestows honour and praise on you on any occasion, do not think that you really possess virtues calling for honour and praise and that you are superior to that person because of those virtues. If you really accept the praise bestowed by others, your vanity will be tickled, you will begin to love honour, your craving for praise will grow and you will go down in the scale of spiritual evolution. If anyone bestows honour and praise on you, persuade yourself that either he is an extremely noble soul whose divine vision catches sight of excellences alone rather than faults or that he loves you so intensely that even your failings appear to him as virtues or again that he is so good that he mentions virtues alone and refuses to defile his tongue by mentioning your faults. If you persuade yourself as aforsaid, you will percieve his virtues alone rather than your own in all the three cases mentioned above. The result will be that you will be saved from the palatable poison in the shape of honour and praise.

Remember : when you look upon others as intent on perceiving others' virtues as aforesaid, you too will be impressed with this virtue of those people and then you too will begin to perceive your own failings and the virtues of others. When you perceive your own failings and the excellences of others, your hankering after honour and praise will cease and you will busy yourself with critically examining and doing away with your hidden faults. Humility and modesty will appear in you and, devoid of pride, you will ingratiate yourself with the Lord by bestowing honour on others.

****

Eschew All Evil.

Remember : we shall get wine from a liquorshop and dry fruits from a shop dealing in dry fruits; for it is these commodities alone that lie stocked there. Similarly a man can offer only that which he has. Therefore, the company of one whose mind is full of craving for sense-gratification and whose life is steeped in indulgence will impart craving and attachment for sense-gratification. Hence never seek the company of those who crave for sense-gratification.

Remember : it is only because of this craving and attachment for sense-gratification that living beings remain steeped day and night in the insatiate longing for sense-gratification and busy enjoying such pleasure. Indulgence in the pleasures of sense enhances the delusion that happiness lies in gratifying the senses; and it is for the joy of sense-gratification alone that with an insatiate longing for the pleasures of sense the embodied soul repeatedly revolves in the whirligig of life and death.

Remember : the craving and attachment for sense-gratification are intensified through the company of those who declare that happiness lies in self-indulgence. Therefore, forswear at once all company which declares that happiness lies in sense-gratification. Eschew literature which glorifies and advocates self-indulgence. Do not hear lectures which extol sense-gratification and avoid the company of people who glorify self-indulgence.

Make it a point to eschew completely dramatic performances, cinema shows, novels and stories, periodicals, drawings, music, dancing and functions featuring items that intensify the craving and attachment for sense-gratification, and which, though appearing delightful at first sight exert a baneful influence on the mind in the long run.

Remember : even good men leading an abstemious life get attached to the pleasures of sense when placed in the midst of such pleasures as well as in the company of those who indulge in them. The moment the craving for enjoyment with a view to gratifying the senses is awakened in a man—be he a hermit or a holy man, a man of renunciation or one given to abstemiousness, a leader or a man of some following, a high officer or a common man, a servant or a master, a householder or a dweller in forest, a preacher or a listener, a preceptor or a disciple, a man or woman—the door to his downfall gets opened, through which he may descend into the deep abyss of ruin and the huge edifice of his spiritual endeavour may be shattered in no time. Therefore whatever you may be, forswear at once as deadly poison all company that awakens the craving for sense-gratification.

Remember : he who aspires to be a man of dispassion, a devotee or a sage after being rid of sense-enjoyments, though living in the midst of such enjoyments and in the company of those who indulge in them, is a fool and deceives himself. Or he is a swindler and hypocrite who thinks like that in order to gratify his craving.

Remember : he is a great fool, a base fellow and a pitiable man, who, while living in the midst of sense-enjoyments and in the company of those who indulge in them, and taking delight in them, looks upon himself as an unattached saint, a man of wisdom or a devotee. Therefore, if you seek after real Self-Knowledge or love of God, completely eschew all luxuries and men indulging in them, and the company of all those who declare that happiness lies in gratifying the senses and propagate and disseminate the glory of sense-gratification.

Remember : he alone is a true devotee or man of wisdom who has totally given up all luxuries as well as the craving for sense-enjoyment and who, having forsworn the company of those who indulge in them, is constantly established either in the blemishless company of God or in his pure spiritual being.

Remember : sometimes the craving and attachment for sense-enjoyment seek to gratify themselves under the cloak of holy wisdom and love. Therefore always scrupulously guard your life against contact with luxuries.

****

Not Poke But Patch A Hole.

Remember: if you exaggerate another's faults, severely criticize them or defame him in society for such faults, and if you expect that by your doing so he will be rid of his faults, you are greatly mistaken. In the first place it cannot be definitely said whether the number and the type of faults you imagine and perceive in him actually exist in him or not. It is possible your judgement may be wrong, your differences with him may have coloured your view, your impression about him may be due to diversity of circumstances or, your judgement being vitiated by prejudice, your own perverted vision may be responsible for your detecting faults in him. If such is the fact, you are committing a new sin by vilifying him, and making his future life a hotbed of unrest by planting ill will in his mind. Hence, before prying into other's faults first detect your own faults. In all circumstances refrain from wounding other's feelings by adverse criticism, calumny and abuse.

Even if there be any fault in anybody in any measure, are you entirely faultless? And are you too not committing a heinous crime by subjecting him to severe criticism and calumny or by using derogatory language against him?

Remember : dwelling on another's faults and trying to lower him in the estimation of others by proving him guilty, not only go to consolidate his faults but even tend to aggravate them and add to their number. By proving the guilt of a man do not confirm him in that fault for ever. In order to rid him of his fault take him into your confidence, extend your love to him sincerely sympathize with him in his suffering and heartily compliment his real virtues, however small, and thus create such a welcome situation that he may recognize you as his friend and well-wisher and may easily give up his fault, even as one would discharge mucus from one's nose, the moment he receives a loving hint from you, and feel relieved and elevated thereby.

Remember : if you severely criticize anybody, revile him and try to malign him by your malicious and insulting speech, and if the audience are amused to hear your vile effusion, express their gratification by clapping their hands, compliment and cheer you, take it for granted that you have not only lowered the popular mental level but are corrupting the mind of innocent people by tainting it with malice, are growing a deadly poisonous fruit by sowing seeds of poison in healthy, innocent and pure minds, and are disseminating animosity and antagonism, anger and violence among the people by spreading malice and hatred. Nay, you are raising a terrible storm of unrest in nature by creating a virulent atmosphere of enmity in the world and consequently preparing to burn the entire living creation in the fierce flames of hell-fire. Ponder what a monstrous sin you are going to perpetrate out of sheer pride.

Remember : you will never be blessed thereby, however great an instrument of universal good you may foolishly hold yourself to be : nor will the world that you seek to benefit be the better for it. To seek to do good to the world by this process would be as preposterous as to expect a sweet nectarean fruit by fostering a poisonous creeper.

Remember : the people standing on the two sides of a channel are not able to meet, afraid as they are of the powerful current that flows between them. Only those who bridge the gulf, who fill the wide and deep chasm parting the two sides and construct a beautiful road on it, nay, who hide others' faults by immolating themselves even as a thread stops the hole made by a needle by inserting its beloved body into the same, such people alone can do real good to the world by scattering love and immersing the world—burning with the flames of hatred and animosity, violence and counter-violence—in the nectarean stream of peace and prosperity. Nay, their own good too lies that way alone.

* * *

Utter Honeyed Phrase, Shun Groundless Praise.

Remember : a honeyed tongue is dear to everybody, while a rough and biting tongue hurts all. How vexed you feel when somebody addresses harsh or piercing words to you and censures, abuses or curses you ! Therefore, never abuse or curse, censure, or use rough and harsh language with reference to anybody.

Remember : rough and harsh language used with reference to anyone, in spite of its being a fault of speech, is no grievous offence if uttered with the motive of doing good to him. It is certainly a grave offence to do harm to anyone, to entertain evil thoughts and evil designs about him and rejoice to see harm come to him. It is a serious offence to harbour such thoughts in your mind even if you speak honeyed words. Ever be on your guard against such offence. Never harm or wish injury to anyone.

Remember : if anyone abuses you, speaks unkindly or angrily to you, calumniates you or addresses caustic and envenomed words to you, make it a point to put up with such words. Far from any harm coming to you, you will be rewarded with the highest good. He is the poorest among men who cuts others to the quick with his piercing words, because poverty characterizes his speech. Nay, he is doing injury to himself with his own hands. The stock of his merits is running out and his sins are accumulating, the bitter consequences of which he will have to reap. Viewing him as an errant, take pity on him.

Remember : he who is not cut to the quick by the pungent and unkind words of others but wishes the abuser well, on the other hand, augments his own merits and is assured of great happiness in future. Therefore, instead of being cut to the quick, wish well of the abuser.

Remember : even he who practises double-dealing, chicanery, thieving, violence and untruth in this life may acquire wealth and honour as a result of his past actions; but certainly these are not the rewards of his present sins. He will reap the dreadful consequences of these sins hereafter when these actions of his will begin to fructify. Therefore never seek riches and honour through immoral actions.

Remember : pure living and good conduct are the most valuable possessions of life. Worldly riches come and go as a result of one's good or evil destiny. In fact, he alone is most indigent, who has strayed from the path of virtue and whose life has consequently become unclean. A man of good conduct is ever rich.

Remember : he who displays excellences which are lacking in him, is anxious to hear others credit him with virtues which he does not possess and indirectly owns them, though remaining silent, slams his door against virtues, puts a stop to their growth and prevents their continuance in him. Faults and foibles find an easy scope to stay and grow in him, and bring about his terrible fall. Therefore, hide even your real virtues; never own them, much less profess any false virtues. Nay, disillusion others who may declare such virtues in you. A good man feels abashed to hear even his true virtues mentioned and feels extremely shy in revealing them. How, then, can he brook to hear of his being credited with virtues or false praise being bestowed on him. Therefore, never hear false praise, much less own false virtues. Run away from false praise and mention of false virtues in you, dreading them as poison or blazing fire. Always renounce them with resolution.

* * *

Money Can Be A Blessing Or Curse.

Remember : money is necessary for maintaining one's existence in the world. But it should never be exalted so much as to let it usurp the throne of one's chosen deity of God Himself. The value of money lies not in making unnecessary accumulations but in devoting it to the relief of other's distress. Make the best use of money according to circumstances by worshipping with it the man who rightly deserves to be worshipped; but never worship mammon itself.

Remember : money is intended to bring one happiness and comforts, not to cause worry. That money alone is useful which is devoted to the service of man, Money should exist as a servant of man but never as his master.

Whether money has come to a man as a blessing or a curse is determined by the use he makes of it. It is a blessing if it promotes righteousness, and a curse if it helps the growth of sin. Remember—mere possession of wealth is no sign of good fortune.

That money, which is not ill-gotten, but is earned by legitimate means and by the sweat of one's brow advances piety. That money, however, which is got through fraud and thieving or by recourse to lying and unfair means develops sinful mentality and promotes sin.

Money should be devoted to service, rather than to luxury. As for the money, which flows into the coffers of a man only for accumulation, makes his mind most dirty even as the stagnant water collected in a pool putrefies and spreads nuisance. And just as ditch-water dries up after putrefaction, that money also disappears after polluting the mind of its owner. Again, even as ditch-water, when it dries, leaves clefts on the soil, such money too, while disappearing, tears the heart. Never let your mind develop attachment for money and never consider it as your own. Incessantly devote it without reserve to the service of its real owner (God or mankind) with ability and magnanimity.

Earn money but never be grasping. Greed is the root of sin. It is very difficult for the man whose heart has developed greed for money to save himself from sin in spite of his best efforts.

Shun the company of the rich who regard wealth alone as their cherished object as well as of their associates who keep close to them as also of the money-grubber. Their association will pervert your mind, develop greed for money and plunge you in a deep mire of sin.

Pride of wealth is an abominable curse. Men who are proud of their wealth do not hesitate to insult their parents and preceptor, saints and holy men and even God. There is no sin which a man blinded by pride of wealth cannot perpetrate. The intoxication of wealth deprives a man of his senses and hurls him into a deep pit.

The right use or misuse of money depends upon the user's mentality. With its help you can accomplish noble acts such as the gift of money, food and land, education and construction of wells and tanks etc. and even abominable acts like the distillation of spirituous liquor, running bawdy houses, abetting murder and manufacturing bombs, gun-powder, atom bombs etc. Those who have got money should use it well under the guidance of a Sattvic intellect. Money has a natural tendency to vitiate your judgement. And if your judgement is already vitiated there is no knowing where it may lead to. It would be like adding fuel to fire.

Give up the false notion that the wealthier a man the happier he is. On the other hand, the more money a man has the more conscious he is of his wants. The greater the feeling of want, the more unhappy one is. It is true that the nature of a pauper's suffering is quite different from that of a rich man's misery. It is, however, certain that the brighter the flame of desire the greater will be the heat and burning.

Never give undue importance to money, either in hoarding or giving it away. It is wrong to suppose that money alone can enable you to practise charity, do service or perform noble acts. It is your mental attitude and not money that counts in genuine charity, good acts and service. Greatness lies in self-abnegation, not in riches.

Devote your money to the service of the poor. Money is a great curse to him who uses it in oppressing or vexing others. Nay, it proves to be the chief factor in subjecting him to terrible tortures in hell.

The very idea of earning money by depriving others of their rightful dues is a great sin. Earn by fair means, live by your honest earnings and ever use only that which honestly belongs to you. Look upon other's money as a deadly poison.

* * *

Right Use of Riches

Remember : all the riches and wealth, comforts and amenities of life that you have are gifts from God. And God has given them to you only to enable you to serve thereby the destitute and the suffering and those in straits.

Remember : every living being has a claim on your riches and wealth as well as on your comforts and amenities of life. They are your co-sharers. Hence it is your duty to give them their share. If you fail to do so you are a usurper, a thief, a dishonest fellow.

Remember : if you hold that you are the sole master of your riches and wealth, as well as of your comforts and amenities of life, possessing the sole discretion to give or not to give them to a certain person and to devote them to any purpose of your choice—to employ them in any way you like—you are mistaken. You are a trustee, not the master. You must employ them wherever it is necessary and obligatory to do so as well as in the required manner and proportion.

Remember : it is want and sufferings of others that have gone to make you particularly rich and happy. Therefore, whatever you have in your possession belongs to those destitute and miserable fellowbeings. To give them their due with honesty and system is your religious duty. This is what you call Yajña or sacrifice.

Remember: he who partakes of the sacrificial remains, that is to say, who appropriates to himself what little is left after proper distribution among all, takes nectar; while the one who takes the whole to himself considering everything as his own eats sin.

Remember: never pride yourself on your having ministered to any living being either through your wealth or through comfort or amenities provided by you. Nor do you think that you have been kind to a poor creature. But feel that you have given one one's rightful due; and be grateful to God by whose grace such a good impulse arose in your mind and you got an opportunity to serve.

Mind you: having rendered any service to anyone do not make him feel that you have obliged him nor do you seek any return for your service nor again do you seek any reward from God either here or hereafter. If you behave like this, the nectar of Divine grace will rain on you and qualify you for the highest Bliss.

Remember: all that you have in your possession belongs to God. It is God Himself who is sporting in the garb of all living beings in the world. Therefore, all that you have appertains to all living beings. That what belongs to God should be devoted to His service and that through your instrumentality is your greatest good fortune.

Remember : if you thus devote your wealth as well as your comforts and amenities to the service of God, regarding them as His and conscious of His presence everywhere, your life itself will become an act of worship to God.

Remember : nothing of this world will accompany you to the other world. You can use such things according to your will only so long as they are in your possession. After your death their ownership will positively pass on to others. You will not have full possession over them in a state of serious illness or infirmity or in old age. Therefore, utilize them unreservedly and liberally in the service of God, so long as they are considered to be in your possession.

Remember : if through the right use of these trifling objects which are bound to slip out of your possession you secure the goodwill of God or attain God Himself, your gain is immense; for eventually these things must part: they would certainly leave you. You, however, would have nothing in return. If you dedicate them with your own hands to the service of all living beings in a spirit of offering to God; your life's purpose will have been served.

****

Harbour Noble Thoughts.

Remember : he whose heart is an eternal playground of noble sentiments of truthfulness, equity, love, forgiveness, fortitude, honesty, contentment, tranquillity, self-abnegation and joy finds the same virtues reflected in his life. Therefore constantly indulge in such noble thoughts alone.

Remember : so long as evil thoughts such as those of falsehood, injustice, spite, anger, intolerance, dishonesty, greed, restlessness, voluptuousness, remorse etc. continue to haunt the mind, a man can never be happy or pure in life. Therefore, drive them out of the heart. If, however, we constantly dwell upon the idea that these thoughts have to be expelled from the heart, they would not leave the heart, but would rather become stronger. By constantly repeating the resolve not to see the moon on a certain day when its sight is believed to bring infamy to the beholder, we are involuntarily led to behold it. Nobody would see the moon on that day if the idea of not seeing the moon were not present in the mind. The constant repetition in the mind of the idea that a certain house is haunted excites fear even if ghosts were not present there. But he who has no idea of a ghost would never be afraid of it. Even so if we repeatedly dwell on the idea of expelling the evil thoughts, the latter would refuse to go out.

Remember: if evil thoughts are to be replaced by pure ones, proceed with the work of entertaining noble thoughts instead of dwelling upon the idea of ousting the former. In place of the mundane affairs and the sins and evils of the world, start dwelling upon the great divine virtues of the Lord such as His auspiciousness, His blessedness, His kindness, love, fondness for His devotees, sublimity, truthful nature, righteousness, tranquillity, blissful character, desirelessness, solicitude for the good of all, even-mindedness and so on. Start reflecting and pondering on the truth and mysteries of God. Commence hearing, singing and dwelling on the delightful and charming stories of His pastimes. Begin striving to meditate on His most attractive form, brimful with incomparable sweetness, which rains nectar all round and enchants the soul even of sages. Evil thoughts will automatically disappear as a sequel to this.

Mind you—do not think of evil even to introduce what is good. It is the thought of evil that keeps it alive and thriving.

Remember: the blissful Lord is a repository of endless exalted and divine attributes. Every single attribute of His is so holy, so comprehensive, so auspicious and so effective that once we start remembering and dwelling on them multitudes of happy thoughts and noble virtues will begin to flash of their own accord.

Remember: the whole world has emanated from God and it is permeated by Him through and through. God is absolutely blissful—the very ocean of virtues. The world too is, therefore, replete through and through with multitudes of blissful virtues. Your inner vision is clouded and accustomed to see the dark side of things. That is why your mind has become a playground of evil thoughts. It is haunted day and night by hosts of devilish ideas. Leave them as they are and do not think of turning them out. Only turn your eyes towards the blissful Lord's blissful character and the string of His noble virtues. When the string of His noble attributes finds a place in the heart, evil ideas will immediately disappear and come to an end in the same way as darkness disappears and comes to an end at sunrise.

****

Do Not Defer Devotion.

Remember : you are deceiving yourself if you think that you will take to the adoration and remembrance of God when your financial position reaches a particular standard or when a particular work of your life has been accomplished, when you have discharged a particular obligation or achieved success in a particular business, when you have found a guru of such and such qualifications or secured a secluded and attractive site and built a beautiful and Sattvic cottage on it.

Remember : there is no guarantee that on your attaining a particular state hereafter you will be able to undertake a work which you cannot undertake now, and which you seek to undertake when you have made good a certain deficiency; for you will continue to experience a deficiency even in that state and will postpone the practice of adoration till you have made good that deficiency.

Remember : there is no certainty that the state you seek to attain will be attained by you. It is just possible that you may be snatched away by death while that state is still awaited. A state cannot be attained by merely aspiring for it. Every worldly state or enjoyment is attained according to one's past Karma. Hence, if you keep waiting for a certain state or object, the practice of adoration will never be actualized. Account such waiting a serious obstacle in the way of Sādhanā (spiritual endeavour).

Undertake without the least delay the practice of adoration and remembrance of God, the real work of your life, in whatever circumstances you have been placed according to your past Karma under the benign dispensation of the all-benignant Lord, and go on intensifying the practice.

Remember : no circumstance whatsoever can stand in the way of him who is keen to practise adoration of God. You do not take to the practice of adoration under the plea of unfavourable circumstances only because of your misleading mind and continue to waste your precious life in the hope of being placed in favourable circumstances.

Remember : no worldly state is perfect. Every circumstance is inevitably deficient in one respect or other. Therefore, you will find any favourable circumstance falling to your lot as deficient. Any such favourable circumstance will then appear unfavourable to you and, in order to make good that deficiency, you will aspire and strive for the attainment of some other state. In this way your human life—which was vouchsafed to you by divine grace for realization of God through His worship—will be frittered away in an unending circle of a sense of deficiency, hope of making it good and striving to that end. No amount of repentance will then avail.

Remember : it is also possible that the other state by which you seek to have your present state replaced, realizing it to be deficient, may not be attained by you; on the other hand, your present state too may receive a set-back or come to an end. In such circumstances you would rather wish the present state to continue. Nay, you would feel that you would be happy if the latter returned to you even then. But who knows whether such a state would be retrieved by you or not ?

Remember : if you fail to recover your lost ground, your agony and unrest will grow all the more and you will not be able to undertake the practice of adoration at all. If, on the other hand, you succeed in regaining it, you will once more begin as before to aspire for some better state.

Remember : if you defer the practice of adoration and remembrance of God till you have attained a particular object or state, such practice would never become a fact. If, on the other hand, you start the practice at once taking every state as favourable to it, the very sense of unfavourableness will vanish out of your mind as a result of such practice and every state will appear favourable to you, with the result that the practice of adoration will become automatic and uninterrupted with you.

Remember : when you begin to enjoy the practice of adoration—and this will be possible only when the impurities of your mind get burnt by the fire of adoration and the mind gets purified—adoration will become life itself to you. Nay, every moment of your life and every gesture of yours will be converted into adoration. The supreme and ultimate end of human existence will then be realized by you.

****

Nature Of Unalloyed Love

Remember : unalloyed love neither remits, nor abates nor ends. That which remits, abates or ceases is no pure love.

Remember : desire, dormant or awakened, craving for sensuous pleasure and infatuation for living beings and objects—these constitute a stigma on love. It is these which pollute love; and that is why, so long as these remain unsatiated, love remits, abates and ceases due to infatuation.

Remember : whether his beloved Lord stays afar or near, a devotee ever sees Him close at hand and feels that he is never disunited from Him.

Remember : sometimes in union too separation is felt due to an overpowering feeling of oneness with the loved One, occasioned by love. But in the pangs of such separation one experiences a superlative pleasure induced by exclusive remembrance. The mental wailing and weeping in such a state is very very sweet.

Remember : a loving devotee finds the highest pleasure only in following the pleasure of the Lord. Even while burning he is delighted at the sight of the sweet smile playing on the lips of his loved One and experiences limitless joy even in the flames.

Remember : in His divine state the Lord is ever above pain and pleasure. But when in the garb of a loved One He cannot bear to see the anguish, the sad countenance, the despondency of His loving devotee. In such circumstances He turns disconsolate Himself. This anguish of His proves to be a source of the utmost agony to His loving devotee, who lives only for the pleasure of the loved One. That is why the devotee is always and in all circumstances free from sorrow, smiling and wearing a cheerful countenance and absolutely unknown to despondency. For, in that state alone he can be happy to see his loved One happy.

Remember : though free from desire, the Lord in the form of a loved One is ever eager to taste the divine and extremely delightful nectar of love of His loving devotee. In His attempt to gratify the loving devotee, to see him happy, He forgets the world, His own lordship and His own glory and incessantly goes on enjoying the most delightful and divine nectar of his love, free from the impurity and poison of longing and dormant desire, forgetting His own self and knowing no satiety.

Remember : reversing their roles in this way the lover and the loved One deal with each other on a different footing. Regarding one's own self as a lover and the other as the loved one, they take delight in making and finding each other happy. Both are pitched at the highest level of self-denial. The Lord sheds His divinity and the devotee relinquishes his endless joy of final beatitude. It is on the most sacred bed-rock of self-abnegation alone that the surpassingly sweet delight of love acquires its unending deficiency and unbounded limitlessness.

Remember : unalloyed love is never marred by censoriousness or the desire for self-gratification. Therefore, there is no question of its remission, abatement or cessation.

Remember : unalloyed love is a pure, soothing and exceedingly sweet nectar which counteracts all poison generated by sensuous enjoyment as well as in the form of sensuous enjoyment and makes one perfectly healthy and immortal—not physically but from the point of view of a life made intensely sweet and nectarean by the love for the loved One.

Remember : unalloyed love is the spotless sun of peace which completely dispels all the darkness of ignorance and not only makes life eternally and perfectly bright, but at the same time imbues it with the nonpareil nectar of tranquillity. The darkness of attachment, craving and infatuation for the pleasures of sense or unrest in the form of dejection and despondency never appears again. Unalloyed love is the dazzling sun which dissipates darkness for ever, but which, like the ordinary sun, never burns by its scorching rays.

Remember : unalloyed love is the spotless full moon, overflowing with nectar of unsurpassed sweetness, which ever goes on waxing. The full moon day, which is followed by waning, is unknown to it. Unalloyed love knows no diminution.

Remember : this unalloyed love has nothing to do with any outward circumstance. It is a purely divine and intensely sweet sentiment, flashing and blossoming in the inner soul, which rarely manifests itself in a partial degree in the life of some individual and enchants the whole world. In other cases, it remains hidden for ever in the innermost depths of the soul.

****

Glory of Satsang

Remember : so long as God-remembrance and spiritual endeavour appear as a burden to you, are mechanically carried on without the co-operation of your mind and finished off hurriedly with a feeling of boredom, it is anything but God-remembrance or spiritual endeavour.

Remember : even though it does not bore you and is done with the co-operation of your mind, yet there is a time-limit fixed for it; and once that limit is reached, there is no idea to continue it any longer that day. If, on any day, the quota could not be finished due to want of time, it does not matter. There is no feeling of any loss in it. This too does not constitute real spiritual discipline.

Remember : real discipline is that which becomes your very life. Its pursuit involves no effort, no hardship. There is no time fixed for it. There is no question of the mind not relishing it or of your finishing it off quickly or giving it up. It continues uninterruptedly for ever and a moment's lapse in it is followed by great uneasiness of mind.

Remember : spiritual discipline is spontaneous and constitutes one's very life. It is not deliberately pursued; it goes on of itself. It is there, it is ever there. It is like the function of respiration, which automatically takes place and is never carried on. Respiration itself is life; life endures only so long as respiration continues. A moment's break in it becomes unbearable. The least interruption caused in one's respiration makes one uneasy beyond words. Respiration goes on unceasingly in an automatic way whether you are asleep or awake, walking or sitting, eating or drinking, talking or standing mute, making love or wrangling, doing worship or transacting business, laughing or wailing. Its continuance entails not the least hardship, no effort, no feeling of boredom. There is no time-limit to it, no displaying it. But the least interruption in it, no matter what one is doing, is immediately felt and makes one restless in mind. In the same way spiritual discipline and God-remembrance become real only when they go on as a matter of course and turn out to be one's very life.

Remember: such a spiritual discipline need not be motivated by any sense of duty nor does it seek any specific reward. One does not take any particular pride in it nor does one appropriate to oneself any credit for it. It is one's life—one's natural life indeed. It is not something imported from outside so as to evoke any special reverence or care. It is one's very *nature;* it constitutes one's only reward, nay, one's very essence. In this way when spiritual endeavour no longer exists apart from the striver, nay, when the end itself can no longer be distinguished from the means or, in other words, when the striver, the means and the end become one—all take the form of spiritual discipline, then alone does the spiritual endeavour become real. So long as such a consummation is not reached, go on striving.

Remember: firm conviction or guileless and unshakable faith is the only recipe which is capable of converting a spiritual endeavour into your very life. This cannot be achieved through any external activity. Here lies the glory of Satsanga (cultivating the fellowship of saints), which gives rise to such a firm conviction and unshakable faith as is instrumental in building a life consisting of spiritual discipline or in evolving a spiritual discipline constituting your very life.

Remember: time is fleeing and the body is fast approaching the threshold of death. Take care that this rare opportunity in the shape of a human body may not be lost, it may not prove to be a source of evil. Its utility lies in spiritual discipline alone. Apply yourself to it. By the grace of God, which extends on you in a limitless measure, and through Satsanga, which is ever available to you in the form of the Lord constantly indwelling your heart and His gift of reason implanted in you, as also in the form of saints and the scriptures, you can easily attain to this level of spiritual discipline. Develop a keen longing for it.

The Virtues Of A Saint

Remember : just as a destitute does not become rich by being given the appellation of Kubera ~~(the~~ god of riches), so an ordinary mortal does not actually become a holy man by being styled a saint. Suppose some one calls you a saint or you profess to be a holy man or enjoy a great reputation or are adored and praised on all sides; but if you are not a saint in the real sense of the term, your own profession of your being called a saint or adored and praised by others is of no value. You deceive others as well as your own self. Therefore, do not profess to be a saint nor consider yourself to be one; but actually become a saint. He who poses to be a saint in order to win adoration and praise, luxury and wealth, honour and prestige or glory and renown, is no saint or holy man.

Remember : a saint is he who sees Truth or God everywhere at every time. An exalted soul is he who sees Lord Vasudeva in all beings, animate as well as inanimate, who is not only identified with God himself, but visualizes the presence of God in the world and inspires God-conciousness in all.

He who instils God-conciousness in others by his conduct and behaviour imbued with God-consciousness, awakens the divinity dormant in them and thereby renders a great service to God, to the world as well as to his own self. On the other hand, he who by his conduct and behaviour imbued with a demoniac spirit arouses in others a devilish spirit which is antagonistic to God, renders a great disservice to God, to the world and to his own self. Therefore, ever keep yourself imbued with God-consciousness and go on awakening God-consciousness in the world at every step. Then alone you will be able to become a saint or holy man.

Remember : a saint or holy man has no pride at all; he who prides on his saintliness—devotion to the highest truth or spirituality—is far away from true spirituality or devotion to the highest truth. Pride of spirituality and devotion to the highest truth proves to be far more dangerous and degrading than that of wealth and power.

Remember : a true saint or holy man neither recognizes himself nor professes to be a saint nor does he accept such compliment if anyone else calls him a saint. A real saint does not truly speaking perceive any speciality in himself, not that he denies any greatness in him out of modesty or civility. He beholds the glory of God everywhere and remains established in it as a matter of course. He renounces even the sense of being a renouncer. No pride, self-esteem or self-conceit of any sort ever touches him.

Remember: a saint never engages, nay, not even thinks of engaging in any egotistic endeavour either for propaganda or for the redemption of any individual. On the other hand, he ever revels in himself. Or for the gratification of his own self he releases the nectarean stream of love for his beloved Lord. He is neither insistent on nor makes any endeavour for the deliverance of the world. His revelry in the Self or the nectareen stream of love for his beloved Lord automatically flowing from his heart extinguishes the fire of agony in the world, dispels the fear of death, nay, brings it face to face with true happiness and enables it to attain everlasting bliss. Here lies the innate sainthood of saints; here lies the virtue and glory of exalted souls.

Remember: true saints and exalted souls are entirely free from all craving and desire, attachment and the feeling of *meum*, pride and arrogance. Hence they are neither conscious of their own sainthood nor do they give an inkling of it to others. That is why nothing is done by them which may be actuated by even a latent desire to be called a saint. They alone who are not saints seek to be called as such. They who are saints are saints of course. Therefore, keeping before you the ideal of saints and holy men, become a saint in the real sense of the term.

****

Reward of Mind-Control

Remember: even as water automatically flows to the lowest level, as the wind naturally blows slantingly, so it is in the nature of the senses to pursue enjoyments rather than turn inwardly and seek the spirit.

Remember: even as the moth in its quest for happiness naturally rushes towards the flame and is singed to death, or as a lordly elephant in rut, hankering after pleasure, automatically runs to meet a cow-elephant and stumble into a pitfall, so the natural course of the senses is towards enjoyments. They carry the mind too along with them and, degrading the soul, which stands identified with the mind, throw it into bondage.

Remember: it is the mind pursuing enjoyment in the company of the senses which is mainly responsible for the degradation of the soul. Hence, in order to bring the mind under restraint and to imbue it with pure thoughts, seek the company of the good every day. Ever keep the mind in such company and submit it to such discipline as may lead to a correct conception of and a firm conviction

Nepal Sanśkrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

regarding the painfulness, emptiness and degrading nature of sense-enjoyments.

Remember: a well-controlled and sinless mind alone is the god, and a mind attached to enjoyments and steeped in their thoughts or, in other words, an unrestrained and impure mind is the devil, in you. It is in your mind alone that the godly and demoniac propensities reside.

Remember: a well-controlled and pure mind alone is your eternal and supremely beneficent friend; while an impure mind running after enjoyments is your greatest enemy. Therefore, ever remain steadily engaged in an endeavour to keep the mind under restraint and purify it. This is what goes by the name of "Sādhanā".

Remember: the mind cannot rest without a resort. It must have something by way of a haunt. At present the mind has made enjoyments its resort. Sensuous enjoyment brings in its wake sorrow, unrest, agony, tortures of hell and an unending cycle of births and deaths. Therefore, switch off the mind from enjoyments to God. To achieve this end, diligently and vigilantly try to keep the mind in touch with God. Cultivate the fellowship of true devotees of God and not of counterfeit devotees attached to enjoyment; seek the company of men of true wisdom and not of those who are proud of their knowledge and are given to the gratification of their senses; of genuine

Karmayogis and not of those advocates of action who hanker after wealth, honour and power, of truly pious men and not of those who indulge in sinful pursuits in the name of piety. Read holy books that are calculated to heighten your aversion to the pleasures of sense and to fan the flame of divine love and, lifting the darkness of infatuation, may kindle the pure light of self-knowledge; and eschew appetite for sense-gratification and which glorifies luxuries. Eat things which enhance purity of mind and not such substances as may heighten Rajas and Tamas.

Remember the mind will be moulded according to the company you keep, the environment in which you live, the food you take and the literature you read. And your movements and activities will answer to the pattern of your mind and the soul will reap good or evil consequences and attain a good or evil destiny according to the nature of your actions.

Remember : A firm resolve on the part of the soul, or dependence on the unaccountable grace of God is fully capable of turning Godward a mind attached to the pleasures of sense. Therefore, making a firm resolve with your soul and placing absolute dependence on the strength of God's mercy, establish your mind in the self and lay it at the feet of the Lord. And your life will certainly be fulfilled.

****

6
4

THE GITA PRESS,
P. O. GITA PRESS,
GORAKHPUR (INDIA)